

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

LOUISIANA PACIFIC STRANDBOARD PLANT

AIR EMISSIONS REVIEW

Volume 2

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Held at the Westwood Inn

Swan River, Manitoba

Wednesday, July 29, 2009

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APPEARANCES

Clean Environment Commission

Mr. Edwin Yee Chairman

Mr. Ken Wait Member

Mr. Ken Gibbons Member

Ms. Patricia MacKay Member

Mr. M. Green Counsel to Commission

Mr. Doug Smith Report writer

Ms. Cathy Johnson Commission Secretary

Ms. Joyce Mueller Assistant

Reporter:

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1 WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2009

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 1:00 P.M.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, ladies
4 and gentlemen. I would like to call this meeting
5 to order. This is a continuation of our meeting,
6 public meeting on the potential health effects of
7 air emission at proposed new levels from the Swan
8 Valley Oriented Strandboard Plant. We met most of
9 yesterday, and we have a number of scheduled
10 presenters for today. And I will note again that
11 we will not be requiring any meetings tomorrow, so
12 today will be -- the final public meeting today.

13 The other thing I would like to note
14 is that if there are any comments or additional
15 information or reports you would like this panel
16 to review on this particular subject, please
17 provide them to us by September 1st. And we will
18 consider all information or comments on
19 presentations that are made, either yesterday or
20 today, that come before us.

21 The only other thing I should probably
22 mention, if you have cell phones, I would ask you
23 to either please turn them off, or please turn
24 your ring tone off. And should you require to
25 take a call, I would ask you to please take it

1 outside of the room here.

2 We will, with that we will start with
3 our first presenter, I guess for Spruce Products
4 Limited, Mr. Ward Perchuk. If you could please
5 come to the presenters table, and take our oath.

6 (Ward Perchuk: Sworn)

7 MR. PERCHUK: I can proceed?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, please proceed?

9 MR. PERCHUK: Good afternoon. My name
10 is Ward Perchuk, I'm the president of Spruce
11 Products Limited here in Swan River, and I'm also
12 the chairman of the Forest Industry Association of
13 Manitoba.

14 Today I wanted to be here just to
15 offer some comments on LP's environmental and
16 social performance that I have witnessed since
17 their arrival a few years ago, back in '94, I
18 believe.

19 Since LP's arrival in the area,
20 definitely standards for forest management have
21 risen. As a registered professional forester, I
22 can state that stream crossings have improved
23 dramatically. Lower quality aspen, birch and
24 black poplar is now utilized, and planning and
25 modeling for future forestry operations has

1 improved dramatically. And I would like to say
2 that the planning I see going on here is the best
3 in the province by far.

4 Our company is the largest softwood
5 user in the area, and as such we have established
6 a good business relationship with LP. Our
7 harvesting operations are intertwined so that in
8 areas that we harvest, these are mixed wood
9 forests around here, we will encounter hardwood,
10 which we will in turn deliver to the LP mills.
11 And on the other side of the coin, LP will
12 encounter softwood in their harvesting operations,
13 which is largely delivered to our facility.

14 I think it is important to note that
15 prior to LP's arrival, and just to attest to how
16 they conduct business, there was numerous small
17 sawmills in the area. LP has been most supportive
18 of these small business people and helped ensure
19 they receive their annual quota volumes for their
20 their own mills. And what we have seen is in fact
21 these people even have better quality wood than
22 they used to experience in the past, because now
23 they have an outlet for the lower quality wood
24 which is still completely suitable for the
25 oriented strandboard application.

1 Essentially, I want to bring attention
2 to the fact that LP, in our experience, have been
3 an honest and ethical company to do business with.
4 It is clear that LP plays a crucial role in forest
5 management in the Mountain Forest Section, and
6 their ongoing operations are linked to the success
7 of many other businesses in this area.

8 LP's ongoing operations provide
9 employment, I am told it is over 170 direct jobs,
10 and in my count at least 60 contractors are
11 affected by their presence here. These would be
12 logging and trucking contractors.

13 In addition, since mill construction
14 the company has spent millions on maintenance and
15 new capital projects that have also created
16 employment in the area.

17 As a corporate citizen, LP has been
18 most generous. There is seldom a week that goes
19 by where some group from our area is noted in our
20 local paper thanking LP for their support.
21 Support has been directed at everything from
22 environmental initiatives such as the Duck
23 Mountain Forest Centre to children's sports.

24 The RTO question at the Minitonas mill
25 is a simple one. The RTOs consume a huge amount

1 of natural gas and produce little benefit. In all
2 of this discussion it seems the impact to the
3 environment burning large volumes of natural gas
4 has been overlooked. I would like to think our
5 provincial officials would be steering us towards
6 bio-energy options.

7 I note LP has recently made a large
8 investment in bio-energy for process heat. The
9 same technology that LP uses to produce boards is
10 used in numerous mills in communities all across
11 Canada every day. Not one of these mills has RTOs
12 and yet all local emissions standards are
13 respected, In other jurisdictions, governments
14 has set standards and instructed OSB companies to
15 comply. In all cases RTOs were not required.

16 (TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES)

17 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We will
18 just continue where you are. I realize you are
19 following more or less the written presentation
20 that you have given us, so if it is okay with you,
21 for the sake of what we have missed, we will just
22 take it right from your written presentation.

23 MR. PERCHUK: That will be fine.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Very good. Please
25 proceed?

1 MR. PERCHUK: We are currently going
2 through the worst downturn in the forest products
3 industry since the 1930s. And at this time, to
4 impose unnecessary environmental costs on a
5 company would be something really irresponsible in
6 my mind.

7 LP is critical to the well-being of
8 many other businesses here in Manitoba. The loss
9 of LP will affect numerous contractors, suppliers
10 service providers, and our company included. So
11 here in the Swan Valley we abide by standards set
12 by Manitoba Environment. And expert evidence will
13 show that the RTOs are not required to meet
14 government standards. So clearly it is time to
15 discontinue the use of RTOs, and move forward on a
16 path for Manitoba Environment and LP to continue
17 to work cooperatively to ensure good air quality
18 here in the valley.

19 It is really, in our estimation, from
20 our company's standpoint, we need to see the
21 provinces' environmental officials work with LP to
22 sort this thing out. And I don't believe that
23 people without scientific background coming
24 forward, such as RM of Swan River which I pay
25 taxes to, coming forward and making claims that

1 there are some issues here. That shouldn't play a
2 role. We should leave it to the scientists.

3 So in closing I would like to say,
4 let's let good science rule the day and move
5 forward with this.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Perchuk.
7 Please, if you remain seated, I will just check
8 with the panel. Are there any questions of
9 Mr. Perchuk from the panel?

10 Thank you very much, Mr. Perchuk.

11 Our next presenter is Mr. Christopher
12 Smith. If you could please come forward, and you
13 have your choice of microphone. And we will give
14 you the oath.

15 (Christopher Smith: Sworn)

16 MR. SMITH: Good afternoon,
17 Mr. Chairman and members of the investigative
18 panel, thank you for the opportunity to give this
19 brief presentation today.

20 My name is Chris Smith and I work for
21 Ducks Unlimited Canada as manager of industry and
22 government relations for our western boreal
23 program. Ducks Unlimited Canada is a private
24 non-profit conservation company dedicated to the
25 conservation of wetlands and associated habitats

1 that benefit waterfowl, wildlife and people.

2 The focus of our work and associated
3 expertise relates to waterfowl, wetlands and
4 associated habitats important to sustaining
5 waterfowl and other wetland dependent wildlife.

6 As such our work does not relate to manufacturing
7 facilities such as the oriented strandboard plant
8 of LP Canada, air emissions or air emission
9 management. Thus my brief presentation today
10 represents our experience working with LP through
11 a long standing partnership with their forestry
12 resources division.

13 DU Canada's western boreal program is
14 concentrated on the conservation of habitat in the
15 boreal forest of Western Canada. This includes
16 the broad band of commercial forest that stretches
17 across the prairie provinces, which is of key
18 importance to the forest industry. Our approach
19 to conservation across the western boreal forest
20 has been to partner with forward thinking agencies
21 responsible for natural resource management. We
22 then work collaboratively to enhance planning and
23 operating practices to ensure healthy watersheds
24 and associated aquatic ecosystems.

25 It is this common interest that

1 brought Ducks Unlimited Canada and LP Canada
2 together in partnership in 2001. In our search
3 for key industries, we established a relationship
4 with LP Canada, and determined there was a mutual
5 interest to work collaboratively on activities
6 that would strengthen the conservation of boreal
7 forest wetlands in Manitoba.

8 Since 2001, DU Canada and LP have
9 collaborated on several projects with the initial
10 focus being on satellite habitat mapping and water
11 bird surveys for west-central Manitoba. This
12 developed into a 5-year boreal conservation
13 partnership with LP, with the goal of working on
14 projects primarily in the Duck Mountains that will
15 result in conservation strategies and improved
16 forest management practices around aquatic
17 ecosystems.

18 Activities to date have included
19 supporting baseline research on riparian bird
20 communities, and conducting an experimental
21 harvest study to help determine the influence of
22 various types of shore line timber harvest on bird
23 communities. We have also completed a detailed
24 wetland inventory for Duck Mountains and conducted
25 extensive surveys to identify important wetlands.

1 Additional highlights include an
2 invitation by Louisiana Pacific to contribute to
3 their 20 year forest management planning, wetlands
4 training for their forestry staff, wetlands
5 awareness training for their contractors, and
6 joint sponsorship of professional workshops
7 focused on forestry and aquatic ecosystem health.

8 At the more local level in 2008, LP
9 requested our advice and input into a harvest plan
10 for an area adjacent to the Cowan Bog Ecological
11 Reserve. The information provided by Ducks
12 Unlimited to LP and Manitoba Conservation assisted
13 them in determining a harvest plan for this area.

14 LP has also been a strong supporter of
15 the DU Wetland Education Program called "Project
16 Webfoot." Since 2004, each year LP has sponsored
17 numerous grade four classes throughout the forest
18 management licence area, and been an advocate for
19 additional local classroom sponsors resulting in
20 hundreds of local children being exposed to
21 outdoor education.

22 In recognition for the collaborative
23 work undertaken by Louisiana Pacific and DU
24 Canada, we recently received the Leadership in
25 Conservation Research Award from the Sustainable

1 Forestry Initiative. SFI is an independent
2 non-profit forest certification program based on
3 the principles and measures that promote
4 responsible environmental behaviour and sound
5 forest management.

6 DU Canada acknowledges and recognizes
7 that the forest industry has an impact on the
8 environment. We are pleased to have the
9 opportunity to work with the forest industry to
10 enhance wetland conservation.

11 In conclusion, our experience to date
12 working on wetland conservation initiatives and
13 education activities with LP has been both
14 collaborative and positive. Thank you.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
16 Mr. Smith. Are there any questions of the panel
17 for Mr. Smith?

18 I have one question. You mentioned
19 that you have been involved with a detailed
20 wetland inventory of the Duck Mountains and you
21 conducted extensive waterfowl surveys. Have you
22 noticed any changes over the years in terms of any
23 potential impact of plant emissions to waterfowl
24 or anything like that?

25 THE WITNESS: No, we have not.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.
2 Our next presenter is Ms. Susanne McCrea, if you
3 could please take our -- we will just be a few
4 moments as we are awaiting to put the presentation
5 up and get copies of the presentation.

6 (Susanne McCrea: Sworn)

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Please proceed?

8 MS. MCCREA: I'm still missing I think
9 one document, but I will start with -- this will
10 take a little while anyway.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: That's fine.

12 MS. MCCREA: Good afternoon, thank you
13 very much for coming to listen to my presentation
14 and, of course, to the others as well.

15 I would like to, first of all, just
16 say that I have respectfully listened to the
17 presentations by all of the other presenters, and
18 while I recognize that we do have some opposing
19 viewpoints here, I hope that you can listen with
20 an open mind to what I have to say as well.

21 I have been at this sort of
22 environmental work for a very long time and I have
23 seen a lot of divide and conquer happen among
24 people that should be natural allies looking for
25 common solutions. So with that I will begin my

1 presentation.

2 My name is Susanne McCrea, and I have
3 been with the Boreal Forest Network for nearly ten
4 years. It is our opinion that the proposal that
5 has been put before you from the Louisiana Pacific
6 Swan Valley OSB mill does not contain adequate
7 information from which to make a recommendation.

8 We have made written submissions, as
9 have the Concerned Citizens of the Valley, which
10 we have forwarded to the Clean Environment
11 Commission, to both Conservation Minister
12 Struthers and to Premier Doer, detailing our
13 objections to the terms of reference for this
14 meeting.

15 While we recognize and appreciate the
16 panel's attendance at community presentations, we
17 are concerned that the process initiated by the
18 Minister does not allow for full and meaningful
19 input by the public. And I speak for the public
20 of Manitoba and not just the public from this
21 region, because this is a broader issue than
22 simply a local one. We will participate in the
23 process to the best of our ability, however, we
24 must respectfully express our objection to the
25 process that has been initiated by the Minister.

1 Our main objection with these issues
2 of process, lack of intervener funding, short
3 notice, and limited public involvement, is that it
4 does not serve the best interests of Manitobans,
5 who have a right to ensure that the health of
6 their families and northern neighbours is not
7 compromised. It is not the way to ensure that the
8 best science is revealed.

9 There are alternatives to this
10 either/or option that has been put before you.
11 Technologies exist now that did not at the time of
12 this original licence, and they need to be
13 explored.

14 The Boreal Forest Network is a
15 non-profit environmental and social justice group
16 founded in 1996, based in Winnipeg, and involved
17 in campaigns across the global boreal forest. We
18 are a group that exists entirely on individual
19 donations and a few small project grants. I'm the
20 executive director of the Boreal Forest Network
21 and founding member and director of the Boreal
22 Action Project. We are member groups of the
23 international pan-boreal Taiga Rescue Network. I
24 am also on their international board.

25 The TRN is a network of organizations

1 and indigenous peoples across the global boreal.
2 TRN member groups are primarily from Scandinavia,
3 Russia, Canada and Europe. And there are also an
4 increasing number of member groups from other
5 parts of the world, including China, South
6 America, Australia and Africa. These groups
7 joined because of a global marketplace, the
8 domination of multinational corporations and their
9 influence on local economies, politicians, labour
10 practices, and the ongoing violations by
11 government and industry against indigenous peoples
12 rights to plan, manage, and control industrial
13 activities on their traditional territories, gave
14 us good reason to be in communication with one
15 another.

16 When Louisiana Pacific first proposed
17 to come to Swan River in 1994, one of the things
18 Swan Valley resident Ken Sigurdson did was he
19 picked up the phone and called the Greenpeace
20 office in Winnipeg. I was the director there at
21 the time. It was then that a group of us formed
22 the Manitoba Future Forest Alliance, a group with
23 no funding, to campaign along with Ken and the
24 newly formed Concerned Citizens of the Valley, to
25 address our concerns about the initial LP

1 proposal.

2 I would like to mention that the
3 Concerned Citizens of the Valley was named by our
4 now Conservation Minister, Stan Struthers.

5 LP had just been fined 11.1 million by
6 the Environmental Protection Agency in the U.S.,
7 as you have heard from other people, for falsely
8 reporting how much pollution the company was
9 producing from OSB plants in the States. At the
10 time this was the largest fine in EPA history,
11 although they topped it later, as you have heard
12 from other presenters.

13 Along with the fine, LP installed the
14 best available pollution abatement technology in
15 11 of its 13 OSB plants in the U.S. And the
16 technology was installed to deal with the tonnes
17 of toxic pollutants being emitted such as benzene,
18 volatile organic compounds, phenols, formaldehyde,
19 hydrogen cyanide and methylene diphenyl
20 isocyanate, the same chemicals that the mill uses
21 here in Swan Valley.

22 The response of the company to this
23 fine at the time did little to reassure us. I
24 remember reading that it would not seriously
25 affect their quarterly statement.

1 Many of these poisonous toxins are
2 known carcinogens and pose a serious health risk
3 to both the community and to workers at the plant
4 who may be exposed to these chemical toxins.

5 I understand that at one point the
6 pressroom the board is made in was not even sealed
7 to contain the toxins internally, and the
8 commission may inquire as to whether this is still
9 the case.

10 BFN chose to present to you today
11 because many people with concerns are intimidated
12 about speaking up. It can be difficult to be on
13 the opposite side of a neighbour or co-worker on
14 an issue like this. But people do speak among
15 themselves, and we have heard many stories. In
16 fact, we would like to suggest that a 1-800 number
17 be set up so that people can voice their concerns
18 anonymously.

19 People do have a right to jobs, safe
20 jobs where a profit cutting employer doesn't put
21 them at the greatest risk of contamination. I
22 would like to note that this extends to plant
23 managers who are driven by performance
24 expectations coming from higher up the corporate
25 ladder.

1 We heard LP say yesterday that they
2 were competing even within the company with other
3 LP mills. We also heard that this process has
4 been going on for eight years. And to the best of
5 my knowledge, up until about 2007, the discussion
6 was not RTOs or nothing, the discussion was
7 switching to RCOs, and it is only recently that
8 the idea has been dropped.

9 There are alternatives to this
10 either/or option. As I said, technologies do
11 exist now that we have not explored. LP argued
12 back in the day that in Canada, as opposed to the
13 States, they were under no obligation to install
14 pollution abatement technology in their Swan River
15 plant, as there were no national ambient air
16 quality standards in Canada. At the time citizens
17 in Manitoba were outraged at LP's attitude toward
18 this important human health issue, and argued
19 effectively that Manitobans deserve no less
20 protection than those that the U.S. received.

21 One thing that hasn't been mentioned
22 is that this group of us hired a lawyer at our own
23 expense to get the province to come to the table
24 with the CEC hearings.

25 The reason that this mill has the RTO

1 technologies where others don't is that concerned
2 citizens took it upon themselves to become
3 informed about the process of producing OSB and
4 the potential health hazards, and spent their own
5 money to lobby the government and present their
6 findings to the CEC. You won't find this
7 happening to this extent in every community.

8 We know the result of the campaign of
9 1994, the Clean Environment Commission recommended
10 the RTO technologies. They also made
11 recommendations about air sample monitoring and
12 the importance and value of public participation,
13 with adequate funding, to inform the process of
14 environmental licensing and to protect the public
15 interest.

16 One of my objectives in making a
17 presentation to you today is to stress the
18 importance to community health and well-being that
19 the decision before you represents. I have
20 travelled here at my own expense, taking time away
21 from other work and caring for my 12 year old
22 granddaughter to ask you to make an objective
23 recommendation that weighs all of the facts and to
24 use the precautionary principle.

25 Louisiana Pacific has submitted a

1 proposal that we believe is deficient. We will
2 provide full information on this and other expert
3 opinion to the Commission, without the financial
4 advantage of intervener funding to the Clean
5 Environment Commission, before the September 1st
6 deadline.

7 Addressing climate change and
8 greenhouse gas emissions: We have heard from
9 Louisiana Pacific that they will emit almost
10 12,000 tonnes less greenhouse gases per year
11 without the RTOs. The natural gas they burn to
12 operate them would then no longer be needed. Yet
13 the main source of greenhouse gases in the OSB
14 industry comes from the burning of waste wood used
15 to produce the heat needed to make their product.
16 How many tonnes of greenhouse gases does this
17 burning process emit and where do these figures
18 come from? What is the total annual amount of
19 greenhouse gases coming from the plant? We need
20 to know accurate total greenhouse gas annual
21 emissions coming from the plant to make any
22 judgment or comparison with other OSB plants in
23 the U.S., in areas where reporting will give us
24 some data for that comparison.

25 Greenhouse gases are a serious issue,

1 and if LP is genuinely concerned about them, they
2 need to report and ideally be monitored for total
3 annual emissions for the mill.

4 There is a cap and trade system coming
5 our way with the advent of the Western Climate
6 Initiative, an agreement which Manitoba is a
7 signatory to. The Western Climate Initiative was
8 started in 2007 by the governors of Arizona,
9 California, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington, who
10 signed an agreement to develop regional targets
11 for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to
12 participate in a multi-state registry to track and
13 manage greenhouse gas emissions among
14 participating regions, and to develop a
15 market-based program to reach their collective
16 targets. This information is taken from their
17 website.

18 The Western Climate Initiative was
19 built on existing greenhouse gas reduction efforts
20 in the individual States, as well as two existing
21 regional efforts. In 2003, California, Oregon and
22 Washington created the West Coast Global Warming
23 Initiative, and in 2006, Arizona and New Mexico
24 launched the Southwest Climate Change Initiative.
25 The Premiers of British Columbia, Manitoba,

1 Ontario and Quebec, and the governors of Montana
2 and Utah have since joined the original five
3 States in committing to tackle climate change at a
4 regional level.

5 Participation in the Western Climate
6 Initiative reflects the strong commitment of each
7 partner jurisdiction to take cooperative actions
8 to address climate change and implement a joint
9 strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This
10 system is still under development, but under it
11 Louisiana Pacific may, for example, have an
12 opportunity to show its commitment to reducing its
13 carbon footprint, by putting aside some of the
14 remaining intact forested areas in the Duck
15 Mountain. Louisiana Pacific is the only remaining
16 company that still has logging rights in a
17 Manitoba Provincial Park. It has also been
18 suggested that tree planting in marginal
19 agricultural areas might be an offset.

20 Each province collects emissions data
21 and makes calculations for their province and
22 submits the information to Environment Canada.
23 Large final emitters, LFE, at this point need to
24 submit emission reports themselves, and this is
25 without the Western Climate Initiative. I have

1 listed websites. The methods for provincial data
2 collection and for the large final emitters are
3 set by the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate
4 Change and United Nations Framework Convention on
5 Climate Change. There is more about their
6 methodology on their website.

7 Currently, in Manitoba, those who emit
8 more than 100 kilotonnes or a 100,000 tonnes of
9 greenhouse gases per year are considered large
10 final emitters. Manitoba has seven large
11 emitters, Koch Fertilizer in Brandon, Manitoba
12 Hydro in Brandon, TransCanada Pipelines in Rapid
13 City, the Brady Landfill, last year's report for
14 the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting in Flin Flon,
15 Graymont West Canada, and the Summit Road Landfill
16 in Winnipeg. Together they represent 11.27 per
17 cent of the greenhouse gas emission in the
18 province, and range from 734,005 tonnes at the
19 highest level, to 111,615 tonnes on the low end.
20 I bring this to your attention to put the claim of
21 saving 12,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases into
22 perspective. The large final emitters I mentioned
23 rank from 82nd to 286th on the list of Canadian
24 greenhouse gas emitting companies. And these are
25 the only publicly available stats for comparison.

1 Environment Canada will require
2 companies who emit 50 kilotonnes of greenhouse
3 gases to start reporting in 2010. The Western
4 Climate Initiative's reporting threshold is ten
5 kilotonnes. And the Western Climate Initiative
6 process will start reporting 2010 data in 2011.

7 There is one document that I'm missing
8 that I would like to bring to your attention. It
9 is the letter.

10 Returning to the subject of climate
11 change, yesterday I saw the names of a number of
12 different groups put up on the board by the
13 gentleman that made the presentation on Louisiana
14 Pacific's proposal. One of them was the Manitoba
15 Eco-network, there is also WWF, the Sierra Club
16 and the Green Party. And I have heard back from
17 several of those organizations and I would like to
18 read you one letter now that's come to me from the
19 Manitoba Eco-network Climate Change Connection.
20 This is re Louisiana Pacific's petition to the
21 Manitoba Government to be allowed to discontinue
22 use of regenerative thermal oxidizers, pollution
23 control devices in the oriented strandboard plant
24 near Swan River, Manitoba.

25 "Dear Sir or Madam, I understand that

1 you are faced with a difficult
2 decision with competing outcomes,
3 toxic waste, greenhouse gas emissions
4 or possible job loss, but I do not
5 think that the only choice here is to
6 either reduce greenhouse gas emissions
7 or to dump massive amounts of toxic
8 chemicals into the environment in
9 order to save jobs. I don't think
10 that it is a good idea to try to
11 prevent dire consequences in one way,
12 by reducing greenhouse gases, by
13 bringing about other dire consequences
14 in another way, releasing toxic
15 chemicals. First of all, we need to
16 agree and accept what objectives are
17 most important to us and to focus upon
18 them. I believe that our most
19 important objective as inhabitants of
20 the closed system that is earth must
21 be to stop poisoning our planet in all
22 ways. Our efforts must not be to
23 replace one set of toxins with
24 another, but to focus our efforts and
25 invest our money and creativity into

1 ensuring that the only allowable
2 output from any human activity are of
3 a substance and quality that are
4 inputs to other processes. This way
5 nature has achieved the balance and
6 sustainability. I understand that LP
7 wishes to contribute to greenhouse gas
8 reductions by shutting down the RTOs.
9 LP claims this will reduce the
10 combustion of natural gas and reduce
11 greenhouse gas emissions by about
12 11,830 tonnes of carbon dioxide
13 equivalence per year. (Winnipeg Free
14 Press, March 10, 2009.) Emissions
15 from stationary combustion sources in
16 Manitoba's manufacturing sector were
17 1,330,000 tonnes in 2007. Therefore,
18 111,830 tonnes would represent .89 per
19 cent of all stationary combustion
20 sources in Manitoba's manufacturing
21 sector in that year. This is a
22 significant amount, but let's put it
23 into perspective. It would be just
24 .06 per cent of all of Manitoba's
25 greenhouse gas emissions from that

1 year. Manitoba needs to reduce our
2 greenhouse gas emissions by 26 per
3 cent of our 2007 level, or 433 times
4 the amount of the proposed LP
5 reduction, if we are to reach our
6 Kyoto target. Clearly, this is not
7 the solution. I understand the RTOs
8 were installed to deal with the tonnes
9 of toxic pollutants being emitted,
10 such as benzene, volatile organic
11 compounds, phenols, formaldehyde,
12 hydrogen cyanide and methane diphenyl
13 diisocyanate. I also understand that
14 many of these compound are known
15 carcinogens and pose health risks to
16 anybody who may be exposed to them.
17 In my mind, LP's primary
18 responsibility is to prevent the
19 release of any of the above named
20 chemicals into the environment. LP's
21 challenge is to discover ways to
22 prevent the production of these
23 compounds while expending a minimum
24 amount of fossil fuels. For example,
25 how about changes to the process or

1 product to reduce the production of
2 these compounds in the first place, or
3 how about using waste process heat or
4 biomass for RTO fuel? Don't get me
5 wrong, I'm a firm believer that we
6 must work diligently to reduce our
7 greenhouse gas emissions, as much as
8 possible, as soon as possible. I
9 believe this because I want to prevent
10 dire consequences for ourselves and
11 coming generations due to climate
12 change. However, replacing climate
13 change with toxic poisoning is hardly
14 a worthwhile exchange. Sincerely,
15 Curtis Hall."

16 And Curtis is an engineer and a project manager of
17 the Climate Change Connection and the Manitoba
18 Eco-network. I have provided their website
19 information, as well as the website information
20 for Western Climate Initiative and Greenhouse Gas
21 Reporting to the commission.

22 Toxics: I'm just going to touch on
23 some of these subjects because they have been gone
24 into quite thoroughly by some of the Concerned
25 Citizens of the Valley, but there are a few things

1 that I would like to mention.

2 Decisions about serious public health
3 issues should not be political. The Government of
4 Manitoba appears to be poised to reverse a
5 decision made in 2007, when it rejected LP's
6 request to increase benzene levels at this plant
7 on the basis that carcinogenic chemical benzene
8 was too dangerous.

9 The toxics information provided to
10 this commission by Louisiana Pacific is one of the
11 areas we find deficient. As a result, the Boreal
12 Forest Network and the Concerned Citizens of the
13 Valley intend to provide the CEC with an expert
14 review of this part of the proposal prior to the
15 September 1st deadline.

16 There is something that we like to
17 call chemical soup. LP has provided no
18 information, for example, about the cumulative
19 effects of exposure to these toxins, nor have they
20 put them in the context of other toxins that may
21 be present in the local environment.

22 Volatile organic compounds cause
23 ground level ozone and smog. That may account for
24 that blue haze that you were referring to.

25 Hazardous air pollutants, including

1 cancer causing agents of phenols, toxic chemical
2 compounds, which are fatal in extremely small
3 amounts, methyl diphenyl diisocyanate, MDI, a
4 toxic resin used by LP in OSB construction is in
5 fact the chemical that blew up in the Bhopal
6 incident that was referred to in Margaret Romak's
7 presentation last night.

8 The Bhopal incident was an industrial
9 disaster that took place at a Union Carbide
10 pesticide plant in the India city of Bhopal, in
11 Madhya Pradesh, in December of 1984. The plant
12 released 42 tonnes of MDI gas, exposing more than
13 500,000 people to toxic gases. The first
14 immediate death toll was 2,259. Some people died
15 in their beds. It was later estimated at more
16 like 8,000 to 10,000 dead within 72 hours. And
17 recent estimates are that about 25,000 have died
18 since from gas related diseases. The Bhopal
19 disaster is often considered the worst industrial
20 accident in history. And there is a website you
21 might be interested in, the International Medical
22 Commission on Bhopal.

23 I mention this to emphasize that there
24 are dangerous chemicals involved here, and
25 chemical combinations that we are evaluating the

1 pollution controls for. When we first began to
2 look at MDI back in 1994, we discovered that a
3 fire in a plant using MDI could have disastrous
4 consequences.

5 Among the other dangerous carcinogens
6 are benzene and potentially formaldehyde, which is
7 now being re-considered as a carcinogen. And that
8 was referred in the health segment of Maria Kent's
9 report yesterday.

10 There are products that can replace or
11 reduce the use of formaldehyde. I have listed a
12 number of them. There are some adhesive systems
13 containing tannin, there are no added formaldehyde
14 resins, formaldehyde free and ultra low
15 formaldehyde emitting adhesives, and also
16 preparation of particle board with a new
17 formaldehyde free soy based adhesive, protein
18 hybrid adhesives, any number of them, and I have
19 listed them and some references for the
20 Commission's consideration. I would urge
21 Louisiana Pacific to take a look at some of those
22 sites when that becomes available to them. These
23 technologies may be considered to replace the
24 formaldehyde that's used at the Louisiana Pacific
25 mill today.

1 It appears that the risk of ALS is
2 higher here than is the norm. If known chemicals
3 used in the LP mill heighten the risk of
4 developing this horrible disease, why take the
5 risk? There are viable options for pollution
6 controls for this mill. It is time to examine
7 what pollution controls are most effective in
8 2009. It is not just a question of RTOs or
9 nothing.

10 When I heard the RTOs were offline, I
11 wondered if maybe it was time to see if there was
12 now something better. I now know that there are
13 other options, bio-filters, et cetera, much
14 information that's already been presented, to
15 consider that may be as effective or more and even
16 less expensive.

17 Economics: Economic advantages have
18 been given to Louisiana Pacific. Various levels
19 of government contributed \$5 million to install a
20 gas pipeline for LP, the lowest stumpage rates in
21 North America, and the last remaining forest
22 rights in a Manitoba Provincial Park have been
23 granted to this company.

24 They knew in 1994 that these RTOs had
25 a shelf life and would need upgrading or

1 replacing. If I know, they knew. I knew at the
2 time. Why didn't they plan for it and save during
3 the good years? The economic downturn they cite
4 happened recently. There was almost 15 years
5 between these events. Is it likely that they will
6 actually leave this forest while anything
7 productive remains uncut in their licensed area?
8 If they do, won't someone else move in? I'm not
9 suggesting this is an outcome we would want. I'm
10 asking people to consider the realistic options
11 here.

12 Weyerhaeuser has left the OSB market
13 leaving their share wide open. We know there is
14 an up-turn coming in the market according to
15 experts in the field. You have heard from members
16 of Concerned Citizens of the Valley that market
17 trend experts predict an upswing in 2010, and LP
18 boasts about the cost cutting measures they have
19 taken to put themselves at a marketplace advantage
20 on their website.

21 There is another thing here that I
22 think we should consider, and that is the NAFTA
23 agreement. In the U.S. where LP sells much of its
24 product, they are required to use RTOs or an
25 equivalent pollution abatement control. Does

1 cutting costs in this way represent a violation of
2 the NAFTA agreement by making it cheaper to
3 produce OSB in Canada?

4 There are costs to human health and
5 indigenous people's rights as well. Dispersion
6 will cover a wider area with higher stacks and
7 increase its emissions. Indigenous peoples
8 traditional territories may be threatened.
9 Meaningful consultation should be taking place.
10 Local economic activities and the subsistence
11 activities of indigenous peoples who hunt, trap
12 and pick berries in this area may be affected.
13 And this is something I have not even heard
14 mentioned here.

15 I ask you now to listen to the words
16 of Sophie Ledoux, who could not be here herself
17 because of a family emergency.

18 "My name is Sophie Ledoux. I reside
19 in Camperville, Manitoba in a Metis
20 community. I am Metis. I would have
21 liked to have been here in person but
22 can't because of family matters.

23 The subject is emissions from the
24 stacks at LP near Swan River. I
25 realize that people need to work, but

1 we must do it in a way to help keep
2 our environment clean. You know there
3 are people who rely on the blueberries
4 by Cowan and Kettle Hills. They buy
5 clothes for their children for school
6 in the fall. We have been doing this
7 for generations. The people around
8 Cowan, Camperville and Duck Bay and
9 other native communities depend on
10 this for part of their livelihood.
11 People label us as being lazy. Well,
12 you go to the patch and there are
13 villages set up there during blueberry
14 season. Our lakes and their natural
15 habitat will also be affected. If I
16 only thought about it myself, it would
17 be fine, but what kind of legacy are
18 we leaving for our grandchildren and
19 generations to follow? As Canadians
20 we are labeled as laid back. Well, it
21 is time to speak up. We need big
22 companies, like you too must, but we
23 must also remember our mother earth at
24 all times. Earth is just like a
25 newborn baby, it must always be

1 maintained or it will die. It can't
2 pick up after itself, it can't clean
3 itself up. It must be looked after by
4 us. We, you and I are the keepers of
5 this great place we call earth. The
6 people here sometimes forget too, but
7 we remind one another at all times and
8 forever lost. Our blueberries are
9 good for so many things like diabetes,
10 regulating the heart, et cetera. We
11 depend on our wildlife, the moose,
12 deer, rabbits. What would happen if
13 all of these are poisoned? People
14 with money or business have always
15 been here taking advantage of our
16 kindness and then kicking us in the
17 butt as they leave us. Then we
18 complain and try to fix the mess that
19 is left behind by those who leave to
20 another place. Pretty soon we won't
21 be able to fix it up. Like this
22 emission control, for instance, how in
23 the world will we be able to fix this?
24 We are always being taken advantage
25 of. We let you in with open arms and

1 trust that the next person will treat
2 our land better, but the same thing
3 happens, broken promises, lies. We
4 encourage children to tell the truth
5 at all times, and as adults we take it
6 upon ourselves to lie to one another
7 when it is to our advantage. It is
8 okay to lie. What a double standard.
9 What do we tell our children when they
10 ask us, how was it when there was a
11 patch or how did you hunt? Please
12 don't let this happen another time.
13 When we heard LP was coming we were so
14 happy because jobs were coming, and
15 also you were going to use the best
16 emission controls for your plant. Now
17 we thought these are people who know
18 their business. I'm pleading from one
19 conscientious person to the next, keep
20 your promise. When you are ready to
21 leave, we will all say, now those
22 people kept their word. Please leave
23 here with our living environment the
24 same way it was when you got here.
25 Our future depends on it. A friend of

1 mother earth, Sophie Ledoux."

2 Sophie asks some questions at the end
3 of her presentation. She says native people have
4 used these lands for many, many thousands of
5 years, blueberries have been a staple food in our
6 diet, able to be dried, and provide vitamins
7 through the winter. Many, many families make a
8 summer living by moving into the blueberry patch,
9 picking berries and selling them. Blueberries
10 have been placed at the top of the list of fruits
11 that are beneficial to health, and she has
12 attached numerous websites which have been
13 provided to the Commission. We have been able to
14 claim blueberries are 100 per cent organic. Would
15 that be true anymore? Were indigenous people
16 consulted about the pollution equipment being shut
17 off? What effect will these chemicals have on the
18 people in the blueberry patches? What effect will
19 they have on the animals like moose, deer, et
20 cetera, that are harvested for eating? Will there
21 be an effect on the water? And how far will the
22 pollution reach with the increased stack heights
23 and increased emissions?

24 They are valid questions. I couldn't
25 say that better myself, so I will close with

1 Sophie's words and ask that this Commission
2 consider carefully what is best for all members of
3 this community, and make a thoughtful and sensible
4 recommendation to Manitoba Conservation.

5 I would like to make one just very
6 brief personal note. Many, many years ago when my
7 son was a baby, I used to housesit for my friend's
8 grandparents who live very close to here in a
9 remote and very beautiful location. I thought for
10 many years that I would eventually move out of the
11 city. This valley and the surrounding area were
12 at the top of my list. I would now hesitate to
13 move here because of my health concerns about its
14 proximity to this mill. I would certainly feel
15 better about it if I was confident that the best
16 outcome had been secured as a result of the
17 province acting on a solid recommendation that
18 protects the public health in the Swan Valley
19 River, made by the CEC in 2009. Thank you for
20 your time.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. McCrea.
22 Are there any questions from the panel for
23 Ms. McCrea? I have one question, Ms. McCrea. You
24 mentioned that there will be consultants providing
25 us with reports and a review of the proposal. I

1 was just wondering, in your presentation you
2 mentioned -- I will have to find it again here --
3 about the burning of the excess wood providing
4 more greenhouse gases than the RTOs. I was
5 wondering, will there be information on that
6 provided to us in terms of the estimated quantity
7 of greenhouse gases from these sources?

8 MS. MCCREA: I will check for you on
9 that point, I'm not too sure at this moment. We
10 are in the preliminary stages.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.
12 Our next presenter is Mr. Murray Wenstob. Is
13 Mr. Wenstob here? Could you please come forward?

14 (Murray Wenstob: Sworn)

15 MR. WENSTOB: I was present at the
16 initial hearings regarding LP coming in here to
17 the valley 14 years ago, 15 years ago. I
18 presented a brief. And the first line of the
19 brief, and I would repeat that today because it
20 still stands, where I said very emphatically that
21 I'm in favour of LP. I'm in favour of them coming
22 into the valley, and I'm in favour of them
23 continuing to stay in the valley, but with
24 provisos regarding independent monitoring and the
25 volume of processing that's going on. Some very

1 serious questions about that were asked back then,
2 and I still ask them. But it is so easy for
3 anyone who asks the question regarding the RTOs
4 and so on to be branded as being opposed to them.
5 I'm not opposed to them, and please keep that in
6 mind, but I have some, as I say, some serious
7 questions about what is going on.

8 I might mention as well that I have
9 had no communication, consultation with the
10 Concerned Citizens Group. I have done this
11 purposely the last six weeks to be totally at
12 arm's length and independent from them, and I'm
13 mildly surprised that the focuses that I have and
14 the conclusions that I have are very parallel to
15 what they have come up with. And I'm not sure
16 what this says, you can decide that.

17 The other question is, or thing that I
18 would like to refer to is the credibility of this
19 report. Whom am I to say this? A few remarks
20 were made already today about the fact that people
21 with no expert or science background are making
22 records and things like that. And I don't say any
23 of this to put any focus on myself, but I say this
24 to hopefully give some credibility to the report
25 that I'm going to give.

1 My background; I have eight years of
2 university at the University of Alberta, the
3 Faculty of Science. I was in the top 2 per cent
4 with marks in organic chemistry, the Faculty of
5 Medicine, which I attended, background in
6 physiology and anatomy there, and in public health
7 as well in another area. I was instrumental with
8 a group of getting hearings and bringing to birth
9 what is known now as the Northern Flood Committee,
10 the hydro operations in Northern Manitoba in which
11 government, hydro, and indigenous people were
12 brought together and formed this committee. And
13 it is 40 years now, and because of the lack of
14 vision I think of both Hydro and the government
15 that they are still dealing with First Nations
16 communities, most recently the Fox Lake and War
17 Lake group, to try and get a multi-million dollar
18 settlement for something that they failed to do in
19 these hearings. We just ran roughshod over many
20 of these things, and I think this is indicative of
21 what went on in hearings 15 years ago, and
22 hopefully not these hearings.

23 And I would hope that following these
24 hearings in the next two days that the panel would
25 put in an interim report in which they request

1 very strongly to the Minister that further
2 hearings be open for questioning, because there
3 are questions that will never be asked the way we
4 are going now, other than through the panel. And
5 as I mentioned yesterday, they are not able to
6 digest all of this material and ask appropriate
7 questions. And I would hope that they would also,
8 in this interim report, request interim funding
9 for a group like the Concerned Citizens, so that
10 this may not be just a LP show.

11 I have read the LP application for RTO
12 removal and increased emission limits for toxic
13 pollutants very carefully. Now, I have listened
14 very intently in this first day and today's
15 hearings to both the submissions of LP and to
16 submissions of members of the Concerned Citizens
17 Group.

18 LP, yesterday morning, presented what
19 appeared to be an air-tight case for RTO removal,
20 air tight until I heard the Concerned Citizens
21 submission. And both of these submissions were
22 documented and based on what is called good
23 science. But which science should I believe?
24 They both had the background. And as reported
25 yesterday, I think the last remark on the LP one

1 was that we go on good science. And this
2 afternoon we heard as well, let science rule.
3 Which science, when they both -- don't anyone tell
4 me that the Concerned Citizens Committee is not
5 based on science and research and unfunded -- by
6 themselves. And all this leads to that obvious
7 conclusion that the present forum of no questions
8 or clarifications, except by the panel, does not
9 fulfill the real purpose of these hearings. And
10 this is not the panel's fault, this is the way the
11 Minister has set it up. Essential and pertinent
12 information does not come out. And I'm sure that
13 LP -- I'm sure that LP would likely have liked to
14 ask the Concerned Citizens Group to clarify and
15 support some of their statements, and vice versa,
16 but these vital questions will never be asked.
17 All the panel is left with is a lot of printed
18 papers. They likely won't call back these groups
19 and say, what did you mean by this, and have them
20 ask each other.

21 Vital questions like if LP's toxic
22 limits are so far below the Provincial limits as
23 they showed on their graphs, the limit up here,
24 and their graph is way down here, why then are
25 they asking for increased limits? They are so far

1 from the limits. It boggles my mind. Why are
2 toxic chemical emissions not expressed in -- why
3 are they not expressed in yearly amounts, tonnes,
4 rather than hourly concentrations, as they did?
5 This isn't understandable to most people. They
6 put in tonnes the greenhouse gas amount because
7 that was to their advantage to see there was
8 12,000 tonnes there, but the rest, one hour over
9 here there might be a limit, you know, that kind
10 of thing. Environmental limits, as shown by the
11 last speaker, are commonly expressed in tonnes.
12 Let's talk a language that people understand.

13 Questions like do members of the
14 Concerned Citizens Group, do they see some
15 acceptable changes in LP's operation since the
16 time of the Dawson Creek documentary? I would
17 like to ask them that, see what they can see
18 positive about LP. And I'm sure they will come
19 out with some positive things if they could have
20 asked.

21 Why would LP, this is the other thing,
22 why would LP, through its lawyer, attempt to
23 prevent the panel and the public here from hearing
24 information it felt detrimental to LP's cause?
25 Why would one do this? Is this indicative of

1 other information being withheld? I don't know,
2 one wonders.

3 So despite the limitations of this
4 process, and the hope that your panel, the panel
5 here will recommend fully environmental reviews,
6 in fairness to both LP and the public, I would
7 still continue to make some additional
8 observations on the LP application which is under
9 review. And remember the only thing -- it sounds
10 like I'm going to say what others have said -- is
11 as if it is anti-NDP -- anti-LP. It is almost the
12 same, isn't it? Anti-LP. Let me make a comment.
13 This slip of numbers, a similar slip was made in
14 the former, I believe it was the other one where
15 an OSB plant, they said an SOB plant. I will
16 leave it at that.

17 Anyway, I will continue with some
18 comments on it. And remember, it is something
19 like, what has happened is the only document that
20 I had and others had is the application made for
21 an amendment to the Act by LP. So that's the only
22 thing that we can comment on because that's all
23 that came to us. So I have to go through that and
24 ferret out the reasoning in it. It is like
25 volleyball, throwing the ball in the middle of the

1 court, and all of the players, their only choice
2 is to stand there and look at it, and that's
3 really what has happened. Unless we pick it up
4 and start playing with it, and put it back to the
5 other side, and that's what hopefully this hearing
6 will do, is not just stand here and look at this,
7 LP has requested this, okay, let's give it to
8 them, that's the easiest way. That is not the way
9 to do it.

10 The request from Louisiana Pacific for
11 permission to remove RTOs from the Swan Valley
12 plant, and for approval to allow higher levels of
13 resultant toxic pollutants is the focus of this
14 brief. The reasons LP gives for the requested
15 amendments are -- this is right from their
16 report -- the reasons they give are, the removal
17 of the RTOs will reduce operating and maintenance
18 costs. And that's their basic request. And they
19 back that up with the fact that in doing this,
20 there will be negligible effects on human health
21 and environment from the increased toxic chemicals
22 emitted. From the increased toxic chemicals
23 emitted, I think that's an important point to see.
24 No one, LP, government, public, nobody denies that
25 there are toxic chemicals coming out of that plant

1 24 hours a day. And there is no denial by LP that
2 they will increase. Keep that in mind, that they
3 will increase if RTOs are taken out. That's
4 accepted, nobody argues that one. And also that
5 the removal of these RTOs will eliminate, in their
6 words, tremendous amounts, eliminate tremendous
7 amounts of greenhouse gases presently emitted.

8 All the above reasons sound so
9 plausible. Cut the costs, negligible health
10 problems, reduce the greenhouse gases, all of
11 these sound plausible and are supported, LP has
12 supported them by their own company's economic
13 scientific consultant studies.

14 However, the amendment application
15 requesting RTO removal and increased allowable
16 limits, while spelling out the LP reasoning, it
17 spells out the reasoning, that's all we had to
18 work with was their reasoning, it fails to address
19 or place any focus on a number of important areas
20 relevant to an amendment decision. These areas
21 and focuses which were not dealt with in there,
22 and I suppose understandably not, is that for one,
23 a primary focus in all discussion, and this is
24 basic here, a primary focus in all discussion and
25 scientific studies relating to RTO removal must be

1 the indisputable fact, and I mentioned this a
2 moment ago, that toxic pollutants, cancerous and
3 non-cancerous, are being emitted 24 hours a day
4 from the OSB plant. Nobody argues that, they are
5 coming out. All parties, LP, government and the
6 public are in agreement with this fact.

7 Only common sense, that's all it takes
8 to realize that the burning of 1,000 cords of
9 poplar each day, burning the residue from these
10 thousand cords, that's what, 50 or 60 truck loads,
11 B trains of logs, burning that residue from that
12 many logs is bound to produce some waste, along
13 with the huge amounts of heated chemical glues
14 that are used. Toxic pollutants are there, common
15 sense tells you, and no one denies they are there.

16 Two, the requested amendment contends
17 that there will be negligible effects on human,
18 human health and environment if the RTOs are
19 removed and pollution limits raised to accommodate
20 the resulting rise in toxic chemicals. And this
21 contention that raising the amount of toxic
22 chemicals is based on scientific studies, good
23 science as we said today, let science rule,
24 science knows. But this is the mistake we make,
25 we accept scientific studies at face value as the

1 final answer rather than seeing science as a
2 resource, a very valuable resource to assist us in
3 making reasoned and reliable decisions. Remember
4 we used to say, I know that's right because I read
5 it in a book, that makes it right. Then we got
6 over that and realized that books aren't all
7 right. Then we went to television, and now we are
8 into the computers, if it is in there, it is
9 right. No. It is only as good as the things that
10 are put in there. So they are a good resource,
11 but that's all.

12 The science studies used by LP to
13 arrive at this conclusion of negligible health and
14 environmental effects failed to address questions
15 such as, and here is where science failed in this,
16 will there be, questions like will there be long
17 term accumulations of toxic chemicals in air,
18 soil, surface water, groundwater, or watersheds?
19 Will there be -- will science answer that? I
20 would like to ask the mayor of Minitonas,
21 yesterday when he talked about the best water in
22 Manitoba from their wells, where does the aquifer
23 originate? In all likelihood it originates at the
24 foot of the Duck Mountains, which is the prime
25 area, a concentrated area of LP pollutants, toxins

1 and contaminants. And what will happen in 20
2 years, 40 years, if these, through the surface
3 water get into the groundwater and how do you
4 clean that up? And as mentioned recently, or in
5 the last report, submission, if these pollutants
6 get downstream and into the waterways and the
7 lakes of the -- what affects the First Nations
8 people or the land where the blueberries are and
9 so on? We don't know these. And that's the
10 questions that were not addressed and are not
11 being asked, can't be asked.

12 Another question, what assurances are
13 there regarding long term effects to human health?
14 Is there any known relationship between the kind
15 of toxins emitted from the OSB plant and asthma,
16 allergies, and respiratory diseases that are on
17 the increase? This was asked yesterday. Are the
18 present air monitoring devices in sufficient
19 numbers and in the right locations to gather
20 reliable data? That's been dealt with. Such
21 questions, and there are many more like that,
22 point to the fallacy of making decisions that
23 affect health and environment solely on limited
24 scientific data and models. There are numerous
25 examples, Fort McMurray tar sands, Hydro flooding

1 in South Indian Lake, Flin Flon, Lake Winnipeg, et
2 cetera, and I have an addendum to this that I will
3 refer to afterwards to say more about that.

4 Scientific studies have been
5 inadequate, short-sighted, costly and irreversible
6 so often. Science is indeed a valued resource but
7 not a final answer.

8 And the third contention from this
9 LP's report is that removal of the RTOs is
10 essential to the economic viability of the Swan
11 Valley plant is based on a very short term view.
12 Does a reputable company like LP, at profitable
13 times, not look long term to the possibility of a
14 market turndown and future maintenance and capital
15 needs, rather than just cutting pollution controls
16 to balance their budget? Long term planning,
17 financial planning.

18 The amendment request also fails to
19 mention past profits, the comparable cost of wood
20 to the Swan Valley plant, or the effect of
21 changing market allotments to the various LP
22 plants. A reliable economic contention that RTOs
23 should be removed, removed for economic reasons,
24 it must have a far deeper research than just
25 pointing to a weak market and not documented

1 competition from other plants. There has to be a
2 lot more to it than that.

3 The fourth one, the last one I have
4 here is that in their application a great point
5 was made about being environmentally friendly by
6 saving greenhouse gases. But look carefully at
7 the benefits section on page 6 of the amendment
8 application. And there it states, this is what it
9 states in their application, that the RTOs produce
10 tremendous amounts of CO₂, primarily greenhouse
11 gases -- the primary greenhouse gas. And the
12 benefits section goes on to quantify this amount
13 as being about 1 per cent, .92 per cent, here it
14 is, .92 per cent of Manitoba greenhouse emissions
15 from stationary combustion sources for
16 manufacturing industries. Now, this is very
17 misleading, because a normal expectation would be
18 that if you are going to compare the amount of
19 greenhouse gas there, used or not used, you would
20 compare it to the current Provincial usage. But
21 instead it is compared, the percentage is worked
22 out on a very small and select group of greenhouse
23 gas users. And as a result, they get this 1 per
24 cent, which is a significant amount, right, but if
25 it is, the percentage is worked against Manitoba's

1 total greenhouse gas, it comes out to a tenth, far
2 less than a tenth of this amount. The figures
3 came out in the last report here. So this amount
4 is, when seen in comparison or in relation to what
5 it should be, in perspective, it is very minuscule
6 to all of ours. And also this argument was used
7 that it is a great trade-off to say this and then
8 allow us to use, put out toxic chemicals. This
9 trade-off argument doesn't stand up.

10 And the conclusion that I have here
11 is, I won't read it all, I will just summarize it,
12 is a review that their request to take out these
13 are -- that current and historical evidence is
14 that scientific studies in themselves are not
15 enough, that the economic decision that was used
16 to support the need to take these out does not
17 really stand up, and that there is a skewed view
18 of the CO2 emissions when it is based just on a
19 small select sample rather than on actual usage in
20 the province.

21 So in light of these facts in this
22 brief, elimination of the RTOs should not be -- I
23 don't feel should be permitted until, not that
24 they shouldn't be taken out, maybe they should,
25 but they should not be taken out until there is a

1 full Clean Environment Commission hearing, where
2 all relevant facts can be presented and examined,
3 rather than just relying on Louisiana Pacific
4 consultants and figures, and the figures also from
5 the Concerned Citizens Committee. Let's not go on
6 either of these groups until we have a chance to
7 question them and take a look at them, because
8 human health and environment issues have a long
9 range effect and are costly effects. A decision
10 by this panel and government regarding adding
11 toxic pollutants to our air, soil, water, and our
12 bodies must not rely only on proof that the LP
13 mill is doing this. It is not a matter that we
14 have to prove they are doing it. But conversely
15 and equally, you have to have proof that the mill
16 is not the cause of this. As a result, if one is
17 in error, let's err on the side of safety and
18 retain the RTOs.

19 I have two addendums just to elaborate
20 on a couple of things. The first one is regarding
21 science, and how science and modeling and
22 consultants are often, not often, but many times
23 inadequate, short-sighted and superficial. Prime
24 current example is Fort McMurray, where science
25 claims that the effluent from the tar sands going

1 into the Athabaska River does not affect human
2 health. Downstream, Fort Chipewyan has cancer
3 cases, a very unique type of cancer. Fish with
4 abnormalities are showing up. You see, you can
5 not prove that these are caused by the effluent of
6 the tar sands, but remember, you can not disprove
7 they are not. Science on either side, which do
8 you believe?

9 The flooding in South Indian Lake,
10 Hydro consultants, science again saw no great
11 physical problems in flooding South Indian Lake.
12 But right after the flooding, 80 per cent of the
13 white fish were contaminated with mercury. The
14 scientists could not find the cause, air
15 pollution, all the rest of it, until a Russian
16 study related from their flooding showed that
17 leaching of natural mercury out of the soil was
18 the cause. It is clearly an instance of science
19 being hurried and inadequate.

20 Sustainability of the Duck Mountain
21 Forest, I won't say much on this because we saw
22 yesterday the gross overestimate of the amount of
23 wood that can come out of there to make it
24 sustainable is the 900,000 cubic metres a year, it
25 has been reduced to six. Now they are questioning

1 around three or something. Science and
2 consultants were -- and this isn't one person's
3 opinion, this came from LP and government sources
4 as well.

5 Tailings from uranium mines in
6 Saskatchewan, these mines were allowed to produce
7 huge piles of toxic tailings, while science
8 assured government and the sparse residents of the
9 area that no harm would come. We are now aware of
10 the costly clean-up required to correct this
11 problem overlooked by science and agreed to by
12 government.

13 Lake Winnipeg is another example of
14 pollution there. Which science study does a
15 person believe regarding Lake Winnipeg, regarding
16 the algae formation? Is it the lack of spring
17 run-off down in the Saskatchewan because of the
18 restrictions of the Grand Rapids generating plant,
19 or is it agricultural fertilizers, is it hog
20 barns, what is it? Does science really know?

21 And these are examples, and many
22 others show that you can't go strictly on science.
23 We need hearings where you can question the people
24 who are putting forward science, and then it is a
25 judgment call as to which is the best science.

1 And you have to, of course, balance this always
2 against social concerns of jobs, that's right, but
3 also of health, environment, and everything else.

4 And the last addendum is something
5 which I think needs to be said at this hearing.

6 In LP's amendment application, on the last page of
7 their application, page 22, it is the last
8 paragraph of it, LP states that due to the costs
9 and the current market -- here is what it states
10 verbatim -- it states:

11 "It is highly conceivable that the
12 Swan Valley OSB plant would shut down
13 indefinitely..."

14 Because of the costs and the market, it is highly
15 conceivable that this plant would shut down
16 indefinitely. That's what it says. How do you
17 interpret this? This sounds very much like a
18 threat. Because the application refers over and
19 over again to the presence of the RTOs as being
20 the main cost factor. If we don't get permission
21 to shut them down permanently, we will have no
22 alternative but to close the plant. That's
23 basically what the intent is there.

24 Such a closure would force -- that's
25 the one side -- but such a closure would then

1 force the Manitoba Government to act. That with
2 workers and contractors out of work, and our
3 provincial resource, wood, not being processed,
4 the only government alternative would be to take
5 back LP's cutting rights, as LP would not be
6 living up to their agreement or using them. And
7 then, like Premier Danny Williams of Newfoundland,
8 the government could re-award these cutting rights
9 in the provincial forest to another company
10 capable of operating in a reliable and profitable
11 way.

12 Now, hopefully such a situation as LP,
13 despite their threats of closing down, or
14 government repossession of forest harvesting
15 rights, hopefully, this will not occur. In such
16 cases, we all know there is hardship for everyone,
17 the workers, contractors, and LP shareholders too.
18 So it is important that both the Clean Environment
19 panel in its recommendations, and the government
20 in its actions, to be aware of the above
21 possibilities but not be guided by them or any
22 threats, or any political considerations, but
23 rather by health, environment and long-term vision
24 are the wise ways or components of a just
25 decision. So thank you very much.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Wenstob.
2 Are there any questions of Mr. Wenstob from the
3 panel?

4 MR. GIBBONS: Just for clarification
5 of Mr. Wenstob's thinking on this. Mr. Wenstob,
6 early in your presentation you mention that the
7 toxic limits are so far below the Provincial
8 limits, as the graph shows. And then the question
9 was, why are they asking for an increased limit?
10 Can I get a little bit more sense of your thinking
11 in this? If the removal of the RTOs still allowed
12 their results to be well below the limits, would
13 that be, would it still be a concern to you? Is
14 it still a concern to you that it's increase is
15 yet still well below the limits, at least as far
16 as we can tell from the data?

17 MR. WENSTOB: If it can be proven that
18 this is so, I would have a concern. But as I say,
19 it boggled my mind to think if the Provincial
20 limits are way up here, you saw the graph as I
21 did, they are way up here, and the pollutants are
22 just a minuscule amount at the bottom except for
23 maybe for one hour up here, and again expressed in
24 hours. But if you were to take these same
25 pollutants and put them in, convert them into

1 tonnes, and look at what the environment is asking
2 about the reduction in various pollutants, which
3 is versed in tonnes as well, I think we would have
4 to take a second look. And the figures showed
5 that their increases they are asking are ten times
6 as much and 20 times as much and 45 times as much.
7 Why would they even ask for an increase unless
8 there is an actual real increase there, when you
9 see the figures? I can't understand. And that's
10 the kind of questions I would like to ask LP, why
11 are you even asking for an increase when you are
12 so far off the limits, even after RTOs are taken
13 out? I don't know. I hope they know.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Is that satisfactory?

15 MR. GIBBONS: Yes.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: I have one question for
17 you, Mr. Wenstob. You mentioned at the onset of
18 your presentation about independent monitoring.
19 I'm just wondering, could you elaborate a bit on
20 that? What is your concept or perspective on
21 independent monitoring?

22 MR. WENSTOB: In my original brief 15
23 years ago, I asked for this, at that time chiefly
24 in relation to the method of cutting, whether
25 close to lakes or historical areas and so on, and

1 they said that these would not be disturbed and so
2 on like that, or the amount taken out and so on.
3 This was left up to sort of fox guarding the hen
4 house and LP was going to do it.

5 And I would say now that I think LP,
6 to their credit, has done an excellent job in this
7 area, it has done a good job of monitoring, but I
8 still think that independent monitoring in that
9 area, at that time I felt was needed. And I would
10 today feel that independent monitoring of toxic
11 effluence and the method in which it is done, and
12 the whole area of monitoring and the type of
13 monitors that are there, and the placement of
14 them, that we need an independent group who will
15 say, you know, this is not right, we need
16 monitoring. If you went out in the Kettle Hills,
17 maybe went in close to the mountain where maybe
18 very few people live, but where the headwaters of
19 the aquifer is, things like that, that's
20 independent, not just leave it up to the company
21 or -- and I will say or government, because
22 government has been very lax, I think. When you
23 see the amount of information that's come through
24 the Concerned Citizens that they did on their own,
25 work that should have been done by the government

1 and, sir, by your department as well, and it
2 wasn't done half as thoroughly as what I have
3 heard here. So independent monitoring is needed
4 very much, sir.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
6 Mr. Wenstob.

7 MR. WENSTOB: Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: We have a coffee break
9 planned for approximately 2:30, but I believe the
10 next presentation will be relatively short. So if
11 it is all right with everyone, I would like to
12 proceed with one more presentation before we break
13 for coffee.

14 So the next presenter will be Michael
15 McIntosh.

16 (Michael McIntosh: Sworn)

17 MR. MCINTOSH: Like Mr. Chairman said,
18 it is short and sweet. So I will just go ahead
19 and read it.

20 The statement of support from the RM
21 of Minitonas regarding the Louisiana Pacific
22 Limited Swan Valley OSB Air Emission Review. On
23 behalf of the RM of Minitonas, I would like to
24 comment on the municipality's relationship with
25 the LP Canada's Minitonas OSB plant.

1 Since 1996, LP Canada's Minitonas OSB
2 plant has been operating in our municipality and
3 has provided approximately 175 jobs.

4 MS. JOHNSON: Mr. McIntosh, could you
5 slow down just a touch?

6 MR. MCINTOSH: I will try and slow
7 down.

8 Through their operation there has also
9 been an opportunity for income provided to many
10 area businesses and related services provided, CN
11 Rail, local logging equipment operators, local
12 semi-operators and drivers, local fuel companies
13 and local parts and service companies.

14 A community liaison committee, which
15 includes members of local municipality, municipal
16 councils was formed in early days with LP's
17 operation. At their regular meeting there is open
18 dialogue and communication exchanged between plant
19 representatives and the councils of the local
20 communities on various aspects of the mill's
21 operations. The LP representatives have been
22 openly discussing their intention to pursue the
23 elimination of RTO units and welcoming all
24 questions from the committee members going back as
25 early as 2001. With over half of their employees

1 out of work due to recent curtailments and the
2 shutdown of the logging side of the operation,
3 there has been a significant decline in the amount
4 of money being spent at local area businesses, not
5 only through these related business, but also
6 through cutbacks in spending by laid-off
7 employees. Most recently we have seen employees
8 seeking employment outside of Swan Valley, and
9 their homes being put up for sale.

10 There will be further impact on the
11 residents and businesses in the RM of Minitonas
12 when the taxes for 2010 see a significant
13 decrease, approximately 20 per cent, due to LP's
14 inability to generate the same rate of income as
15 in past years. Over 60 per cent of this decrease
16 in funds is school tax dollars, money over which
17 the municipality has no control. This shortfall
18 must be levied on other properties in the RM of
19 Minitonas in order to obtain the current funding
20 for the local area education.

21 In the past the municipality's service
22 clubs, non-profit organizations in the Swan Valley
23 have all received sizeable donations from LP
24 Canada Limited for local projects, like for
25 instance the Minitonas arena receiving \$30,000

1 towards their artificial ice plant in the arena.
2 There has also been many significant donations
3 made to the RM and Town of Minitonas volunteer
4 fire department for safety equipment such as
5 turn-out gear, communication equipment, and many
6 other things.

7 The RM of Minitonas has also
8 experienced a great working relationship with the
9 LP when their roads and infrastructure have
10 required maintenance and repairs due to heavy
11 logging truck traffic heading to the plant with
12 loads that cause direct damage to municipal roads.
13 We have also made \$150,000 upgrade project on 488,
14 in which LP provided 35 per cent of that, even
15 though the traffic on this particular road was
16 only partly connected to the mill's operations.
17 There was very much -- there is quite a bit of
18 local traffic, grain hauling and cattle and
19 whatever, but they still participated in
20 up-keeping that road. And it is quite a lot
21 better road since.

22 Through recent presentations and new
23 information provided to the municipality, there is
24 no indication that the removal of the RTOs will
25 have any adverse effect on our local environment.

1 There is, however, an indication that the nitrogen
2 dioxide and the CO2 gases are emitted through the
3 process of burning the natural gas in order to
4 operate the RTOs. The elimination of these RTOs
5 would result in less contamination being produced,
6 as well as a reduction of consumption of a non
7 renewal resource. This may even possibly result
8 in better air quality and health for local area
9 residents.

10 Not only would the elimination of this
11 process save over \$3 million per year for the
12 local OSB plant, but the future cost of \$10
13 million to replace the RTOs will be saved as well.
14 This might very well make our local plant more
15 viable and ensure its future, along with the
16 future of many of our local employees and related
17 businesses. This is surely a worthwhile
18 trade-off, elimination of a system that currently
19 shows no benefit to our environment or the health
20 of local area residents.

21 Should the Clean Environment
22 Commission find that the recent shutdowns of the
23 RTOs at the Minitonas OSB plant have had no
24 detrimental impact on the air quality in our area,
25 and that their permanent removal would result in

1 less emissions created by the burning of natural
2 gas, then the RM of Minitonas is in full support
3 of permanently eliminating the need for LP to
4 spend over \$3 million annually on a process that
5 shows no benefit to our environment.

6 I would like to finish this by saying
7 thank you for providing me with the opportunity to
8 comment on this important issue. I trust that
9 your committee, along with many experts being
10 consulted during this process will review all
11 relative data and make a fair decision, based on
12 facts and science, with consideration for the best
13 for our area and for the local environment. Thank
14 you.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. McIntosh
16 Are there any questions from the panel? Go ahead
17 Ken?

18 MR. WAIT: I had one question of
19 clarification on the community liaison committee.
20 Was the RTO phase-out originally first talked
21 about in 2001?

22 MR. MCINTOSH: To add, I guess, I am
23 the representative on that committee as opposed to
24 one of our council members, but it doesn't much
25 matter, it is still being reported back, but I was

1 personally there.

2 MR. WAIT: All right. Thank you.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, Ken?

4 MR. GIBBONS: Mr. McIntosh, for point
5 of clarification, this appears near the top of the
6 second page of your presentation, you say this may
7 possibly even result in better air quality and
8 health for local area residents. I am just
9 wanting to get a sense of your understanding of
10 the situation as you put this together. You do
11 note that turning off the RTOs would reduce NOx
12 and CO2, but there are requests for increased
13 limits for other questions. Are you saying, when
14 you say this, is it your intention to say that we
15 don't find those increases to be concerning, is
16 that --

17 MR. MCINTOSH: Yes, because of the
18 data that's been -- that has been collected, that
19 they are below the Provincial, I guess it is
20 Provincial numbers. So that even a small increase
21 is -- or whatever increase they have, they are
22 still going to be below it. So we are seeing
23 that, you know, we are relying on the science of
24 the different Ministries to look after that. And
25 of course, if you are not burning all of that

1 natural gas, that should be, that part will be
2 gone. So that's kind of what we are meaning by
3 that, that we don't -- not recognize that there
4 may be an increase, as LP has said, but, I mean,
5 there is a trade-off. Everything causes
6 something, you know.

7 MR. GIBBONS: That's what I was trying
8 to get at. Thanks.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
10 Mr. McIntosh. We will now have a short break,
11 about 20 minutes. When we reconvene the meeting,
12 we have two more presenters in this afternoon's
13 session. So we will start again in about five
14 minutes to 3:00. Thank you.

15 (Hearing recessed at 2:36 p.m. and
16 reconvened at 2:55 p.m.)

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Could I have everyone's
18 attention please? As I had indicated earlier on
19 before our break, we have two more presentations,
20 one by Mayor Glen McKenzie, who will be up next,
21 and then we will finish the afternoon off with the
22 United Steel Workers. If there is anyone else,
23 they should please present themselves to Joyce at
24 the door, if there is any other individuals or
25 groups that would like to make a presentation this

1 afternoon.

2 So with that, I would ask Mayor Glen
3 McKenzie to please come to the presenters table
4 and take the oath.

5 (Mayor Glen McKenzie: Sworn)

6 MR. MCKENZIE: First of all, I would
7 like to, in a belated way, welcome the members of
8 the Clean Environment Commission to Swan River and
9 the beautiful Swan River Valley. I'm here to
10 represent the position of the Town of Swan River
11 on the proposal of Louisiana Pacific to
12 decommission the plant's RTOs. And I have in my
13 possession a resolution of our town council that I
14 can give to your staff, if that is possible?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, thank you, please,
16 by all means.

17 MR. MCKENZIE: I have been the Town of
18 Swan River's representative on the Citizens
19 Liaison Committee set up in 1995 to provide local
20 input into the operation of the plant. I don't
21 think that anyone who was around for the initial
22 hearings would argue that LP came to the valley
23 with less than a favorable environmental record.
24 Having been part of the process for some 14 years,
25 I must commend Louisiana Pacific for their

1 willingness to work with Manitoba Environment and
2 the Citizens Liaison Committee in addressing the
3 different concerns that have been brought forward
4 over that time period. They have always been
5 willing to listen and they have been open to ideas
6 that were for the good of the Swan River valley.

7 Some examples come to mind: Firstly,
8 the large bark pile that had to be disposed of in
9 some way, it evolved from farmers using it for
10 bedding, to incinerating it, to using it as a heat
11 source. In fact, the Town of Swan River has
12 worked with Louisiana Pacific in acquiring bark
13 for our cover at our landfill. The bark has
14 helped a great deal in reducing what was once a
15 huge rodent problem to something that is now a
16 non-issue. Unfortunately, for the Town of Swan
17 River, that bark is no longer readily available as
18 it was in the past.

19 A second issue that comes to mind is
20 the ash that was at one time being transported to
21 landfills in Alberta. A test project was
22 undertaken whereby the ash was proven useful in
23 achieving a pH balance in what was once useless
24 alkaline farmland, and it has made that land into
25 productive land. This was a positive use for what

1 was once considered to be a useless byproduct.

2 At one time the town of Swan River
3 Fire Department frequently responded to calls at
4 the LP plant to assist the Minitonas department.
5 Through being proactive and taking suggestions
6 from local fire departments, the fire problem is
7 all but eliminated. In fact, I can't recall the
8 last time that the Town of Swan River Fire
9 Department was called out to LP.

10 Some mention has been made of the
11 baseline health study that was undertaken. I'm
12 trying to recall the exact details without having
13 to go back into my files. The initial study
14 involved some respiratory testing, plus a survey
15 that focused on people's perception of the plant.
16 After five years, steps were taken to bring -- to
17 do a follow-up to that study. And after the
18 survey was completed, it was noted that people's
19 positive perception of LP had increased
20 dramatically, and the Citizens Liaison Committee
21 and Manitoba Environment agreed there was no need
22 for the continuation of that study.

23 What these examples show is that
24 Louisiana Pacific has been more than willing to
25 take suggestions from Manitoba Environment and the

1 Citizens Liaison Committee, and systematically
2 tackle the tough issues and problems.

3 The economic impact of the forest
4 industry on Swan River and the Swan Valley is
5 huge. LP and other forest industry companies are
6 making every effort to weather this downturn with
7 a minimal effect on our communities. However, job
8 uncertainty is already causing many of our
9 hardworking young families to seek employment
10 elsewhere. Schools are losing students,
11 businesses are being directly impacted.

12 Some have suggested that it has only
13 been since the recent economic recession that LP
14 has been requesting a decommissioning of the RTOs
15 as a way of reducing their operating costs by
16 approximately \$3 million, and that in time of
17 economic crisis, we are being asked to make a
18 choice between jobs and the environment. This is
19 just not true. It was as early as 2002, to my
20 best recollection, that the first requests came to
21 Manitoba Environment and the Citizens Liaison
22 Committee to find a way to decommission the RTOs.

23 The Citizens Liaison Committee was
24 always of the opinion that this would be okay, as
25 long as the emissions were within the standards

1 set by the Province of Manitoba and Manitoba
2 Environment. This is what we believe to be the
3 role of the Manitoba Government and their
4 environmental department, to set the standards for
5 emissions and to enforce those standards.

6 The evidence we have received in the
7 modeling that was done indicates that the
8 decommissioning of the RTOs will result in
9 emissions that are within Manitoba Environment
10 standards for things like benzene, formaldehyde
11 and VOCs. It would seem easy for Manitoba
12 Environment to do things like stack sampling and
13 ambient air monitoring after the decommissioning
14 to ensure that these standards are met.

15 We also feel that closer attention
16 should be paid to the reduction in greenhouse
17 gases and the positive impact this would have on
18 the environment as a result of shutting down the
19 natural gas burning RTOs.

20 The people of Swan River know that the
21 Clean Environment Commission will make a fair
22 decision. If after your deliberations the data
23 collected shows the emissions to be within
24 Manitoba Environment standards, we see no reason
25 why LP should be forced into a \$3 million expense

1 that no other Canadian OSB plant has.

2 Thank you for allowing me to make this
3 presentation on behalf of the Town of Swan River.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions
5 of Mayor McKenzie from the panel? Go ahead, Ken.

6 MR. GIBBONS: Actually I have two.
7 One relates to the reference to the health study.
8 As you may know, some people have raised questions
9 about those. I'm just wondering from the town,
10 from your perspective and the town council's
11 perspective, did you find the use of what was
12 effectively a perception study, in the second
13 study, sufficient to deal with the concerns that
14 the town had, or would you have preferred, or
15 would you like to see in the future something
16 which would deal with more physical data?

17 MR. MCKENZIE: This is going back for
18 me, because I can't remember where I left my
19 glasses this morning, I would have to see
20 directly. But the perception we have is that if
21 the study had shown that that there was a real
22 negative perception amongst the people that were
23 surveyed, that the plant had a negative impact on
24 their health, that we would have proceeded with
25 the study to document that that was actually the

1 case.

2 MR. GIBBONS: So the sense was people
3 felt their health was fine and that it was
4 unaffected. And from your perspective, that was
5 sufficient.

6 MR. MCKENZIE: That was the rationale
7 at that time, yes.

8 MR. GIBBONS: The second question,
9 unrelated to that directly, but perhaps in the
10 context of air quality monitoring it has some
11 indirect relationship. You mentioned that you
12 would like, from your perspective, if Manitoba
13 Environment could continue to do sampling and so
14 forth, including ambient air monitoring. From the
15 perspective again of the town council and so on,
16 is it your sense that the existing monitoring
17 stations are sufficient for the kind of
18 information that you would need to be satisfied
19 that things were being well looked after, or do
20 you see some need for additional --

21 MR. MCKENZIE: My initial
22 understanding of why the air monitoring stations
23 were placed in the location that they were placed
24 is that it had to do -- they took a look at the
25 Swan River Municipal Airport and the directions of

1 the prevailing winds, and I think they did a
2 compass roll somehow that measures the wind from
3 different directions over a time period. And in
4 order to take maximum advantage of where the
5 prevailing winds were, that was where Manitoba
6 Environment was apparently going to locate the air
7 monitoring stations.

8 MR. GIBBONS: So the decision was
9 satisfactory?

10 MR. MCKENZIE: The actual decision
11 comes from Manitoba Environment.

12 MR. GIBBONS: Thank you.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Mayor McKenzie, I have
14 a follow-up question here regarding stack sampling
15 and ambient air monitoring. You indicate in your
16 presentation that it would seem easy for Manitoba
17 Environment, referring to government, to do the
18 stack sampling and ambient air monitoring. My
19 understanding is LP does both right now, the
20 ambient air monitoring and stack monitoring?

21 MR. MCKENZIE: I think there was also
22 provisions for Manitoba Environment to do like a
23 random kind of check on the stack sampling, that
24 their people would come from Brandon or Winnipeg
25 or wherever they come, and from time to time they

1 would do stack sampling and check the ambient air
2 monitoring stations.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: That is correct. It is
4 our understanding that the stack monitoring hasn't
5 been done for some time on behalf of the Manitoba
6 Government side. I was just wondering if there
7 was any concerns raised regarding that?

8 MR. MCKENZIE: I guess the concern I
9 would express is then to the Province of Manitoba
10 and their Department of Environment that, you
11 know, we expect that if you say you are going to
12 do stack sampling, that you would do it.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: And in terms of the
14 ambient air quality monitoring, do you feel it
15 should be done by the Manitoba Government versus
16 Louisiana Pacific? Because my understanding is
17 that Louisiana Pacific will do the ambient air
18 monitoring and provide the data to the province
19 for their review.

20 MR. MCKENZIE: I guess, I'm not sure,
21 I don't know enough about the exact process of
22 ambient air monitoring. But in an air monitoring
23 station, I would think that it would be all
24 mechanical. And at the end of the day you submit
25 the information, if it is computerized or whatever

1 on a disk, and it goes day by day, and readings
2 for different levels of contaminants would show up
3 in that monitoring. But that's without me going
4 and looking at the station.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you very
6 much.

7 MR. MCKENZIE: Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Our last presentation
9 that is so far listed for this afternoon is the
10 United Steel Workers. So if I could ask those
11 people that are representing the United Steel
12 Workers local to please come forward to our
13 presenters table.

14 (Darren Chmelowski: Sworn)

15 (Chris Parlow: Sworn)

16 (Lyle Sagert: Sworn)

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Please proceed,
18 gentlemen.

19 MR. PARLOW: Thank you. Dear
20 Chairperson Edwin Yee, fellow panel members,
21 participants, thank you for allowing us to speak
22 at this meeting. Please allow me to introduce
23 myself. My name is Chris Parlow, and as noted in
24 our opening comments on the front page, I am
25 president and business agent of our local. I have

1 also held the position of regional health and
2 safety director. I have been in these positions
3 for the past seven years, working full time on
4 behalf of United Steel Workers. I also hold a
5 position on the United Steel Workers Wood Council
6 executive, which represents forestry workers
7 across Canada, in addition to being on the
8 Manitoba Federation of Labour executive, which
9 comprises of most union and worker activists in
10 our province.

11 Our on site participation at the LP
12 plant level is to be a part of committees,
13 including joint health and safety committees,
14 plant committees, negotiating committees and
15 others.

16 The United Steel Workers local 1234
17 represent workers in the forestry sector, along
18 with other sectors across Manitoba, Canada, and
19 globally, including specifically the Minitonas
20 Swan Valley area.

21 Other operations in Manitoba in which
22 we represent forestry workers is Winnipeg,
23 Neepawa, Roblin, Birch River, The Pas, Cranberry
24 Wabowden, Thompson, and points in between.

25 We are here as workers to present to

1 you information related to the decommissioning of
2 the RTOs, which we as workers know is a key
3 component to a viable future for the Louisiana
4 Pacific operation here in the valley.

5 The plant committee on site, which is
6 elected by fellow union members, has been kept
7 abreast of ongoing activity, as has the office of
8 the United Steel Workers local 1324. The United
9 Steel Workers are fully in support of this request
10 from LP to decommission its RTOs, which were
11 voluntarily installed when LP built the
12 operation's pollution control systems in 1995.

13 The plant committee on behalf of
14 workers were formally notified and allowed to
15 review the request to amend the environmental
16 licence during November of 2008 and afterwards.
17 As per the November 18, 2008 letter from LP to
18 Tracey Braun of Environmental Assessment and
19 Licensing Branch, you will note that we are cc'd,
20 as are all of the others to whom the letter is
21 forwarded to.

22 All regulations, procedures,
23 environmental standards have been met, since the
24 abatement of the RTOs, and prior to the abatement,
25 as were the steps to follow when approaching the

1 government for relief. The evidence shows us the
2 facts that we rely on come about due to what
3 happens in Manitoba at this operation. At no
4 time, any time, has any professional in the
5 environmental field, whether public sector or
6 private sector, ever revealed LP is not living up
7 to its end of the bargain when it comes to
8 complying with this environmental licence at the
9 mill.

10 Since January 1996, when workers put
11 through the first panel of OSB, LP in Manitoba has
12 never been found, and I emphasize that, never been
13 found to put through, or never been found to be in
14 violation of environmental standards in the mill.
15 They deserve respect for that effort in Manitoba.

16 United Steel Workers work hard to make
17 sure our environments are safe. When workers are
18 negligent -- excuse me, when companies are
19 negligent in their responsibilities, we hold them
20 accountable, and work hard to fix problems. This
21 doesn't apply here in this issue with LP Canada in
22 Manitoba. All of what they have done and are
23 prepared to do has demonstrated that they are
24 committed to being in compliance with the laws and
25 with the regulations they are asked to abide by.

1 That's what we want as workers.
2 Workers feel that it is advantageous for the
3 Province of Manitoba to amend this environmental
4 licence for the following two reasons, which we
5 feel are vital to this whole issue. Number one,
6 which we will expand a little bit on, is the
7 United Steel Workers feel strongly that Louisiana
8 Pacific will comply with Manitoba's Environmental
9 licence requirements without the RTOs on line.
10 And number two, Louisiana Pacific needs financial
11 relief gained by the abatement of the RTOs to
12 assist it in surviving the most challenging time
13 in the history of the forest industry in Canada.

14 Let us share with you why we feel so
15 strongly about our position. Oriented strandboard
16 manufacturers don't build plants in Canada with
17 RTOs, not before or since Louisiana Pacific built
18 its plant in the Minitonas area in 1995. It is
19 not a requirement, it is not a required component
20 of Canadian facilities in order to comply with
21 environmental regulations. We believe as workers
22 there is an obvious reason for this. OSB mills
23 can run safely without them. Those who say
24 otherwise have no facts to show they can't. We
25 support facts rather than hypothetical theories

1 that are baseless and contribute to the vast arena
2 of fear mongers.

3 LP has spent tens of millions of
4 dollars in pollution control devices, such as
5 state of the art burning and drying systems which
6 utilize all of the excess bark while lowering
7 emissions, which allowed for the bark incinerator
8 to be shut down, and improved performance as it
9 relates to pollution controls. We have attached
10 in our submission to the panel a letter to the
11 editor where Mr. Lyle Sagert comments. And Lyle
12 will talk about this when he makes his
13 presentation, but Lyle is mentioned earlier as an
14 USW representative on site at LP, with training
15 and education in many areas. Lyle holds a
16 Bachelor of Science in chemistry, for example.

17 It is further described that by
18 shutting down the RTOs, there are fossil fuels
19 saved which reduce greenhouse gases and nitrogen
20 oxides. Especially important to note is that
21 pollution control equipment the mill has in place
22 includes wet electrostatic precipitators, which
23 are included in the tens of millions of investment
24 in pollution controls at LP outside of RTOs.

25 In concluding this part of our

1 conversation and presentation, we want to
2 reiterate that science based on facts has revealed
3 that LP can effectively run its mill in compliance
4 with environmental standards. We are in a
5 devastating economic crisis, there is no doubt
6 about it. Canadians are seeing the forest
7 industry collapse before their eyes. Tens of
8 thousands of families are without work in the
9 forestry sector. Unemployment levels in our
10 forestry towns have reached epidemic proportions.
11 Manitoba has seen in the last few years, recently,
12 a reduction of forestry jobs unlike ever before
13 seen before in its history. Currently we are
14 enduring the longest layoff ever at LP in
15 Manitoba, where on August 4th, 2009, many of our
16 members will have suffered through 134 days of
17 being out of work since January 1st, 2009. This
18 doesn't include having to endure being laid off in
19 2008, for the first time in LP's history in
20 Manitoba, due to economic reasons, which continue
21 in 2009.

22 Despite this, we do recognize it could
23 be even worse. Fellow Canadians in our industry
24 have seen their plants close. In Hudson Bay,
25 Saskatchewan, which is very close to the valley,

1 we saw the OSB operation close July 11th, 2008.
2 They closed without the additional cost of RTOs
3 being a part of the operation. Workers, families
4 and communities are desperate for relief from this
5 crisis in the economy. Other OSB mills have
6 closed. Work curtailed across Canada, as per
7 April 2009, Wood Based Panel International
8 document, which I have included also in our
9 submission. Communities not like ours, Drayton
10 Valley, Alberta, High Level, Mirimichi, right
11 across the country, Slave Lake, Wawa, Ontario, and
12 too many communities to actually write down on
13 this because we are talking hundreds.

14 It is interesting to point out, in the
15 document that I'm referring to, and again it is
16 the document identified as Wood Based Panels
17 International, which was published on April 7,
18 2009, it talks about brutal times. And as people
19 who look after workers, we know better than most
20 the brutality of the times that we are in. And it
21 identifies all of the operations that have closed
22 from coast to coast.

23 In one aspect of the document it
24 refers to the CEO of LP. During the March, and I
25 will read a quote from the document.

1 "During the March LP conference call,
2 Rick Frost said he had adjusted down
3 his expectations for total U.S.
4 housing starts for 2009 to 600,000.
5 That's approximately one-third of the
6 underlying demand. This is the lowest
7 demand anyone has ever seen."

8 And I bring that to your attention, panel, because
9 there have been comments that have originated, and
10 I think it is important for you to know the
11 updated comments that were made in March of 2009,
12 in this April document.

13 As indicated, we as workers are living
14 in these brutal times. Any characterization by
15 the contrary, by those in opposition to this
16 amended environmental licence, is false. We hope
17 that markets will change, as some have predicted.
18 However, until then we live with uncertainty
19 unlike ever before seen.

20 And another document that we have
21 presented to the panel, Wood Markets Monthly
22 International Reporting, June/July of '08, we
23 refer to this document because it said at that
24 time what may or may not happen. This document
25 talks about massive declines in housing starts,

1 having the OS producers on the ropes, in 2007.

2 Further to this article, we as workers
3 have seen it as far worse than originally
4 predicted. We as workers have felt this slaughter
5 of jobs firsthand. Fathers and mothers telling
6 children it is their last day of work at an
7 operation that at one time was projected to
8 provide jobs for generations. This onslaught of
9 job losses has been occurring with all things
10 being equal for companies. We workers here in the
11 Swan Valley region, again, know better than most
12 what the impact could be if things are not equal
13 and LP is forced to have RTOs as part of their
14 environmental requirements. The writing is on the
15 wall, on the wall of every facility closed
16 permanently or curtailed.

17 Allegedly, those in opposition
18 describe LP using this effort to reduce costs by
19 decommissioning of RTOs as somehow taking
20 advantage of an economic crisis never before seen
21 in the forest industry to threaten closure. We as
22 workers have never felt this as a threat. I have
23 never been threatened with closure talk. However,
24 all of us in the industry know the possibility is
25 real. We feel it is a reality of the forest

1 industry today. Mills that ran for decades, with
2 no reason to ever imagine closure, are now
3 dismantled or sitting idle. Believe it.

4 In conclusion to my presentation
5 before Mr. Chmelowski, we as workers will always
6 fight for a clean environment. Our support for
7 this decommissioning of the RTOs doesn't in any
8 way diminish our conviction to achieve a clean
9 environment, rather it recognizes we can accept
10 change to environmental licences, which science
11 has illustrated doesn't compromise our values or
12 the health of citizens.

13 We ask that this panel recognize this
14 can be done, as it is in all other jurisdictions
15 in Canada, without exorbitant costs the company
16 can't justify. Again, no other OSB manufacturer,
17 as many people have said in this room, has RTOs
18 and the costs that are associated with running
19 them. Fair playing fields are necessary in this
20 forest industry crisis. Louisiana Pacific
21 deserves that due to their valuable contribution
22 to the valley region and Manitoba as a whole, they
23 deserve that, a fair playing field. So we
24 encourage the panel to give them a fair shake.
25 Please make this amended licence a gateway to a

1 better chance of production of OSB and rewarding
2 jobs, rather than impose an obstacle which could
3 spell disaster for the future of hundreds of jobs
4 in the valley region.

5 And I respectfully submit this to the
6 panel, and Mr. Darren Chmelowski also has a few
7 words.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Perhaps before we
9 proceed, if there is any questions of the panel
10 for Mr. Parlow? Yes, go ahead Ken?

11 MR. GIBBONS: If I might, because I
12 think there will be members of the audience who
13 will wonder about this, and I thought it might be
14 useful if you could take a moment to explain your
15 concern about some of the baselessness, as you see
16 it, of some of the criticisms. Earlier, and I'm
17 not sure if you were here for that session, I
18 think you might have been, but there was reference
19 to the idea that many of the American competitors
20 have RTOs. And someone I think even used the
21 phrasing, Canadians deserve as much protection as
22 Americans get and so on. You work in the
23 industry, so you have another perspective. Can
24 you speak to that a little bit, why that's not an
25 issue and so on?

1 MR. PARLOW: I'm glad you asked that
2 question. I live in Canada, I abide by the laws
3 of Canada. And the companies in which we go ahead
4 and represent workers at, we ask that they abide
5 by the laws of Canada. With respect to what goes
6 on in the United States with regard to labour laws
7 and environmental aspects of things, currently,
8 right now, we are not -- we are still a sovereign
9 country and we still have our own laws and
10 procedures on which we go ahead and take care of
11 workers. And we would just like to make certain
12 that what doesn't get lost in the mix is that we
13 are dealing with Manitoba laws, Manitoba efforts
14 to ensure a sustainable environment. And LP has
15 continued for the last 14 years to comply.
16 Because a lot of things can get lost in that mix
17 and confuse the issue. So we are trying to stick
18 to the issue of being in Manitoba and dealing with
19 this issue in 2009, regarding Manitoba
20 environmental standards. If those standards
21 change, well, then you go about and you address
22 them at that time, according to the changed
23 standard. So with no undue respect to those who
24 talk about what goes on in the United States, all
25 I can say is that we live in Manitoba, Canada

1 here, and we are going to represent workers
2 according to the laws of our land.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Parlow.
4 Please continue.

5 MR. CHMELOWSKI: I would also like to
6 thank Mr. Edwin Yee and the rest of the panel for
7 the opportunity to speak. A little bit of
8 background information on me. I'm Darren
9 Chmelowski, I am a resident, born and raised in
10 the valley. I'm a 13 year employee for LP and
11 hold the title of press and dryer operator. I'm
12 also the chair and the first vice president of the
13 local 1-324 Steel Workers representing the hourly
14 employees at the Minitonas site.

15 Before LP came to the valley, I used
16 my education in environmental management and
17 natural resources management technology to secure
18 a position within the Department of Natural
19 Resources in Manitoba. Part of my job description
20 was to enforce all Provincial Acts and
21 regulations.

22 After six years working at that
23 department, an opportunity was offered for me to
24 return home and work on the construction crew
25 building the mill. Upon completion, a job was

1 offered to me to become a dryer press operator by
2 LP, which I accepted. I'm very active in my role
3 with the Steel Workers, and safety, health and
4 welfare of workers are a priority.

5 I would not be speaking in favour of
6 the increased emission limits if for one
7 millisecond I thought the LP application would
8 jeopardize my family, coworkers, or fellow
9 citizens.

10 As an operator I was involved in the
11 2004 dryer energy system project. A noticeable
12 difference was the bark waste which was all but
13 eliminated. Dryer inlet temperatures were reduced
14 from approximately 1700 degrees Fahrenheit down to
15 1100 degrees Fahrenheit and below. The new dryers
16 are safer and efficient. Air is recycled back
17 into the system allowing us to achieve this,
18 unlike the three pass system dryers before.

19 Lower temperatures equal less chance
20 of fires. Mr. Barkowski, the mayor of Minitonas,
21 testified that the Minitonas Fire Department has
22 not been called to the mill for more than two
23 years. There are standard operating procedures
24 for running the equipment which coincides with all
25 environmental licence guidelines.

1 For the record, I have worked
2 approximately 1186, 12-hour night-shifts, and at
3 no time has anyone from LP instructed me to shut
4 off a RTO and continue to dry or produce board. I
5 take great offence to comments made yesterday
6 during the testimony by one of the Concerned
7 Citizens of the Valley that the RTOs were being
8 purposely shut down during the night. We are
9 there, on the shop floor, running and maintaining
10 the equipment. It is important that the CEC know,
11 as well as the citizens in the valley, that we
12 would never put them at risk and we never have and
13 we never will.

14 We bring this up because any
15 allegations to the contrary, we want stopped at
16 this CEC public meeting. We have investigated
17 LP's proposal and dispersion model calculation
18 done by the National Council for Air and Stream
19 Improvement Incorporated. We have no reason not
20 to believe the information that was submitted.
21 The whole process was done transparently on LP's
22 part, and we support this application.

23 This meeting is about the application
24 to decommission the RTOs at Swan Valley LP,
25 Manitoba, Canada. It is not about the past, USA,

1 or other countries. Hearsay, speculation and
2 assumptions should be called out of order and only
3 the facts should be considered.

4 Approval of this proposal will be
5 positive for the environment and our local
6 economy. I urge you to approve the application as
7 respectfully submitted.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
9 Mr. Chmelowski. Are there any questions for the
10 presenter? Thank you very much.

11 Please proceed.

12 MR. SAGERT: Darren thought I should
13 begin with a little humour, I know there hasn't
14 been much of it the last two days. So I'm sure
15 some of you who watch TV have seen some Kia Forte
16 commercials on TV, with the beekeeper getting
17 stung and sending out the bees, and the Karate
18 guy. Well, public speaking is not my forte. I
19 have a shaky voice, I get nervous, I can wring a
20 gallon of water out of my hands right now. I will
21 try to speak into the mic, sorry. But as the
22 commercial goes, public speaking is not my forte
23 but this is. I am able to put my thoughts down on
24 paper quite well, and that's the reason I want to
25 speak to everyone here. There goes my shaky

1 voice.

2 I would like to thank the chairman,
3 Mr. Edwin Yee, and the rest of the panel for
4 allowing me to speak on this very important issue
5 to myself, my fellow coworkers, and to the
6 residents of the Swan River Valley. I too am a
7 concerned citizen. Now, if you just bear with me,
8 I will have to make a correction to my report,
9 because I was under the assumption that
10 Mr. Wenstob was one of the concerned citizens.
11 And I want to give kudos to Mr. Wenstob for
12 actually being at LP's presentation yesterday
13 morning for its entirety.

14 One thing I noticed yesterday, that
15 there was not one single member of the current
16 Concerned Citizens Group that was in attendance
17 for the whole LP presentation, which I found very
18 disappointing. My parents instilled in me a core
19 value of, if you listen before you speak, you will
20 gain the respect and trust of others ten-fold. So
21 I was very disappointed in that. I believe the
22 commission should hold that into account.

23 My name is Lyle Sagert and I stand in
24 support of the Louisiana Pacific's request to
25 revise their environmental licence and eliminate

1 the use of RTOs, both as a worker and as a valley
2 resident. Let me start by giving you some
3 background about myself. I grew up on the family
4 grain farm south of Minitonas, only ten miles from
5 where the mill sits now. I graduated high school
6 in Swan River in 1990, and went on to Brandon
7 University where I received my Bachelor of Science
8 in chemistry. At the time I never dreamed of
9 being able to utilize my degree in the Swan River
10 Valley, as it was in an economic decline with
11 little industry and small farms disappearing at an
12 alarming rate, my dad's farm being one of them.

13 Then late in the year in 1994,
14 construction of the LP mill began, and I started
15 working at the mill in October of 1995. Almost 14
16 years later, I am still living my dream of working
17 here in the valley, raising a family with my wife
18 of 12 years, Kara, my Karlyne, who is eight, and
19 my six year old son Keaton.

20 During my time at the mill I have
21 worked at many different jobs within the mill,
22 including dry end operating positions. I was also
23 a dryer press operator, and I currently hold the
24 position as a process technician in the quality
25 control lab. I have also been very involved with

1 the union, Steel Workers 1-324, having held
2 positions on the safety committee, negotiations
3 committee, and I'm currently on the plant
4 committee as a vice chair. I also represent
5 workers on a provincial level, as a second vice
6 president for the local union.

7 I take the safety and well-being of
8 workers and their families very seriously. I
9 would never want to see that jeopardized. Our job
10 as union committee members is to ensure that our
11 members are respected and that we hold the company
12 to task when they are not respected. We have been
13 through several arbitrations over the years with
14 the company, and have both won some battles and
15 lost some battles. At the end of the day, both
16 sides deserve respect.

17 This battle the company is now
18 enduring with the proposed elimination of the RTOs
19 is something we, as a union, respect and support.
20 The company has been forthright and transparent
21 from the beginning, working with us throughout
22 this whole process.

23 It was during my time as a dryer press
24 operator, around 2003 and 2004, that LP spent
25 approximately \$26 million on a new dryer energy

1 system, utilizing single pass drying instead of
2 triple pass drying, and using a state of the art
3 burner system to heat the dryers. This in turn
4 would help eliminate the excess waste bark problem
5 we had, allowing the company to shut down the
6 inefficient bark incinerator, and in the end
7 eliminate the need for RTOs.

8 At the time there was no economic
9 crisis, it just made good business sense and
10 environmental sense, and these changes still make
11 good sense.

12 I was personally involved in the
13 start-up and commissioning of the new drying
14 system. I moved off of shift work to work
15 straight days for several months, developing
16 standard operating procedures, SOPs for short,
17 with the suppliers that would enable us to dry
18 more efficiently and safely, knowing full well
19 that being able to operate this equipment properly
20 would hopefully lead to the eventual elimination
21 of RTOs, and making our mill even more viable.

22 I also helped develop lock-out tag-out
23 procedures to ensure the safety of our workers
24 while working with this new equipment.

25 As I said before, I was at the mill

1 from the beginning. I was one of many workers who
2 worked in excess of 30 days in a row during the
3 start-up of the mill, working up to 16 hours a day
4 trying to get the mill up and running. Most of us
5 were farm kids who never worked in the industry
6 before. When showing up to work the first few
7 months, you did not know if you would have time to
8 eat a sandwich on the fly or not. It was very
9 tough. But in the end we persevered, becoming
10 LP's flagship mill by breaking all kinds of
11 production and safety records, and all the while
12 running in compliance with the environmental
13 licence set forth by the Government of Manitoba.
14 Not bad for a bunch of farm kids.

15 I took pride in my job as a press
16 operator and dryer operator. And I was both upset
17 and hurt by insinuations yesterday, third hand I
18 might add, that we shut off our pollution control
19 equipment during night-shifts. No steel worker at
20 Swan Valley OSB would ever cave to any such
21 request, and no such requests were ever made.
22 Those are the facts firsthand.

23 I would also like to comment on the
24 Ill Winds video shown yesterday. Firstly, I would
25 like to remind the panel we are not the Montrose

1 mill, we are not the Dawson Creek mill, we are the
2 Swan Valley mill. In Dawson Creek, which was a
3 unionized IWA, which is now the Steel Workers,
4 mill at the time of the video, not one current
5 worker was interviewed. Only ex-workers were
6 interviewed, which makes me take their testimony
7 with a grain of salt.

8 There was reference from Dawson Creek
9 to slowing production down during stack testing
10 there, and then speeding up when it was over. Let
11 me tell you how stack testing worked for us press
12 operators and dryer operators. I dreaded this
13 week, sometimes weeks of stack testing. We had to
14 be able to run and dry full speed for hours at a
15 time to ensure we were environmentally compliant.
16 If something on the line were to go down for over
17 a minute, which in the early days was quite often,
18 the process had to start over again. It was very
19 stressful. Yet as workers we knew that the
20 results would show the true emissions coming out
21 of the stacks. Why would we ever try to cheat the
22 system? We would only be cheating ourselves, our
23 families, and our community.

24 LP also has an environmental
25 management system at the mill in Swan Valley. It

1 has members from management, as well as union
2 members, who develop standard operating procedures
3 for any environmental issues, from handling leaks
4 and spills to disposing of paint cans properly. I
5 would dread to see my dad's reaction as a retired
6 farmer if he had to abide on the farm by all the
7 procedures that we set at the mill. I'm sure a
8 lot of current farmers today would feel that same
9 dread.

10 I currently work in the quality
11 control lab, where we deal directly with the
12 formaldehyde resins and MDI glue. We test the
13 product as it comes in to ensure it meets our
14 quality standards. References have been made in
15 our local paper for which one of the reasons we
16 are required to run RTOs is that we run a
17 different kind of resin in our system.

18 Well, let me tell you facts. I have
19 personally rerouted resin railcars to our
20 neighbour mill in Hudson Bay, about an hour and a
21 half away, when we have had excess resin on our
22 line. Hudson Bay does not have RTOs. They are a
23 larger capacity mill than us. Oh, yeah, and they
24 have also been indefinitely shut down due to the
25 economic crisis for over a year.

1 In a recent letter to the editor I
2 stated, "If Mr. Soprovich thinks for one minute
3 that I would put my family's life and health in
4 jeopardy, all for the sake of saving my job, then
5 he is sadly mistaken."

6 One of the concerned citizens stated
7 to me yesterday in a sidebar from the meeting that
8 she would believe that statement if I was willing
9 to move my family east of the mill where the
10 prevailing winds blow. I was shocked to hear that
11 statement. I was from Minitonas. I have friends
12 with kids the same age as my kids who live east of
13 the mill. I can't even justify her statement.

14 LP is not hanging the shutdown of the
15 RTOs over the union's head. We see the reality of
16 the situation ourselves. Half of our members have
17 been laid off for the majority of the year. Many
18 good friends and coworkers have moved on, or are
19 barely scraping by as we speak.

20 I ask the Commission to base their
21 conclusions on the facts. I believe the evidence
22 provided by the company, including the health
23 assessment that was presented showing that there
24 will be no adverse health effect to the residents
25 of the valley. Remember, this is something that

1 was mill driven, not corporate.

2 Kevin Betcher, Kevin Warkentin, Al
3 Hambley, and their families all live in the valley
4 alongside the rest of us, breathing the same air
5 as the rest of us. That is very important to me.

6 I believe in fairness. Does it make
7 sense that we are the only OSB mill in Canada
8 required to run RTOs? New technology or not,
9 other OSB mills do not need or have them. Does
10 that sound fair to the one mill that may be forced
11 to use them? Instead of investing \$3 million per
12 year into things like wages and benefits, new
13 technology, reforestation and community groups and
14 events, a select few would like us to spend that
15 money burning fossil fuels and emitting huge
16 amounts of greenhouse gases unnecessarily.

17 I believe the facts don't lie. If I
18 had any doubts, I would not be up here today
19 speaking on behalf of workers. Like I said, I do
20 not like to speak in public.

21 I would like to thank the panel again
22 for their time, as well as for everyone in
23 attendance that were willing to listen. Thank you
24 very much.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Sagert.

1 Are there any questions from the panel for
2 Mr. Sagert? Go ahead, Ken.

3 MR. WAIT: This relates to worker
4 exposure in the work place. Is there any
5 monitoring done for worker exposure in the plant
6 by the union or workplace safety and health
7 committees?

8 MR. SAGERT: Actually, being a past
9 line operator, every week we do MDI spot checks
10 with equipment that's calibrated, and we are able
11 to check it ourselves, based on we have cards that
12 we double check what the colours are and stuff
13 like that to ensure we are below the parts per
14 million acceptable. And I do know our resin
15 suppliers, Hexion, also come in yearly. I don't
16 have the data with me, but they also come in and
17 also do formaldehyde testing. And they have never
18 ever raised a concern to us. I have worked
19 personally with them, I have helped them with it.
20 It goes over an eight hour exposure limit, never
21 had a concern.

22 MR. WAIT: What would the levels for
23 formaldehyde over eight hours?

24 MR. SAGERT: I don't have the data
25 with me. I didn't realize I would need it.

1 MR. WAIT: No, but I'm certainly glad
2 it is being carried out, that's all. That's it.
3 Thanks.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions, Ken?

5 I have one question, Mr. Sagert. You
6 mentioned you currently work in the quality
7 control lab dealing directly with the resins,
8 formaldehyde and MDI. I'm just wondering, we have
9 heard from other speakers talking about a great
10 deal of resins are used, and I am just wondering,
11 is there a lot of resins actually used or is
12 there -- how are the resins in terms of
13 application on your boards, is there a lot or --

14 MR. SAGERT: I don't want to give away
15 the Caramilk secret, but it goes by a percentage
16 based upon the wood going across our scales.
17 Without giving away exactly what it is, it is a
18 very low percentage, less than 5 per cent of our
19 wood, and it goes by solids of resin, not liquid.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. No other
21 questions?

22 Thank you very much, gentlemen.

23 Unless there are any other presenters
24 that have identified themselves for this
25 afternoon's session -- we will remain here for the

1 reminder of the afternoon session, which takes us
2 until 5:00 o'clock, at which time we will break
3 again. We will reconvene at 7:00 should there be
4 any other presenters.

5 Thank you very much for attending.

6 Thank you to the presenters.

7 (Hearing recessed at 3:56 p.m. and
8 reconvened at 7:00 p.m.)

9

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Given that it is now
11 7:31, I would officially close the public meeting.
12 I would like to thank everyone for their
13 attendance and presentations, thank you.

14 (Hearing concluded)

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OFFICIAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE

I, CECELIA REID, a duly appointed Official Examiner in the Province of Manitoba, do hereby certify the foregoing pages are a true and correct transcript of my Stenotype notes as taken by me at the time and place hereinbefore stated.

Cecelia Reid
Official Examiner, Q.B.